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DRAMATICS

*The Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers
and Students of Dramatic Arts*

(Formerly THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN)

Vol. XVI *200.13*

OCTOBER, 1944

35c Per Copy



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Scene from the production of *The Eve of St. Mark* at the Greenwich, Conn., High School (Thespian Troupe 243). Directed by Ruth Morgan.

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NOTES AND FOOTNOTES

by the
EDITOR

Greetings! May the new season bring you a generous portion of success with your activities in dramatic arts! With the European War now approaching its end, we can look forward to the gradual elimination of various wartime restrictions, permitting, for one thing, the manufacture of many civilian articles now urgently needed. The work of all play producing groups should become progressively easier as peacetime conditions return.

We sincerely hope that our new title will meet with your approval. This represents the first of several changes which will be made gradually to widen the basis of our circulation. The addition of new departments as soon as more paper is available is now being considered. Expansion of our publication to meet post-war conditions will in no sense mean that less attention will be given to high school activities in dramatic arts. Our magazine will continue to serve as the official organ of The National Thespian Society.

We welcome the new members of our contributing staff of editors. Professor C. Lowell Lees is widely known for his work in the college theater and as the author of the book, *A Premier of Acting*. Lucy Barton is recognized for her scholarship in the field of stage costume. Her book, *Historic Costume for the Stage*, is accepted as a classic in its field. Ivard N. Strauss several years ago established himself as an authority in stage make-up through his book, *Paint, Powder, and Make-up*. Paul Myers has written theater reviews for several New York papers and is well situated to observe the latest developments on Broadway. Julius Bab is a student of the theatre and the drama, with considerable research to his credit. We are confident that, during the coming months, the contributions of these leaders will add immeasurably to the worth of this publication.

A review of the 1943-44 season among high schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society (see page 15) shows no appreciable decrease in the number of plays produced over that of the previous year. Among 374 schools reporting, the average stood at 2.30 major plays per school. The previous year the average stood at 2.32 among 305 schools reporting. The same situation is reflected among other dramatic activities sponsored during the past season. We have a right to

assume, therefore, that wartime restrictions and conditions of the past year had no greater effect upon high school dramatics than was true of the previous year.

Two playlists are available free of charge to high schools and other amateur drama groups from The National Thespian Society. These are: *A Wartime Playlist for High School Dramatics Directors* and *A Directory of Plays for All-Female Casts*. When ordering indicate list desired and enclose 25c to cover mailing charges. Address your request to College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"Education for New Tasks" is the general theme for American Education Week, November 5-11, according to information received from the headquarters of the National Education Association. Daily topics for the week are announced as follows: Sunday, "Building World Wide Brotherhood"; Monday, "Educating All People"; Tuesday, "Improving Schools for Tomorrow"; Wednesday, "Developing an Enduring Peace"; Thursday, "Preparing for the New Technology"; Friday, "Enriching Our Cultural Heritage"; Friday, "Bettering Community Life."

These subjects lend themselves well to the dramatic medium. We suggest that drama groups, in school and community, prepare appropriate programs for the observance of this important event. High school drama groups have here a unique opportunity to appear before community clubs and organizations, bringing their message on Education and the postwar world. Drama groups should experience no great difficulty in writing plays and pageants based upon the need of expanding educational facilities to meet new conditions. More important perhaps for the sake of humanity as a whole is the production of programs and plays stressing brotherhood and cooperation. We cannot over-emphasize the value of presenting original scripts bearing upon local conditions. Preparation for the observance of National Education Week should begin at once.

Plans for closer ties among educational theatre groups in America were discussed at a meeting held in Cleveland on July 15 under the sponsorship of The American Educational Theatre Association. We regard action of this nature essential to the success of all educational theatre groups in the post-war program. Now is the time to act. We shall look forward to further developments.

Advertisers not only help us publish this magazine, but they have the plays, materials and supplies necessary for successful drama program. We ask that you give special attention to all the advertisements contained herein. When you answer any of these advertisements, say that you "saw it in DRAMATICS MAGAZINE." The advertiser will appreciate that bit of information and so shall we.

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COLLEGE HILL STATION, CINCINNATI 24, OHIO

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Foreign	2.50
Single copy	.35

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DRAMATICS MAGAZINE is published monthly (eight times) during the school year at College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio, by the National Thespian Dramatic Honor Society for High Schools, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio. Dates of publication: Oct. 1, Nov. 1, Dec. 1, Jan. 1, Feb. 1, Mar. 1, April 1 and May 1. Mildred E. Murphy, National Director; Jean E. Donahey, Assistant National Director; Ernest Bavey, National Secretary-Treasurer; Earl W. Blank, Senior Councilor; Paul E. Opp, Senior Councilor.

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DRAMATICS MAGAZINE



A modern dance group helps demonstrate how our national income reached such record proportions. This scene is taken from the premiere production of *Figure It Out* at the Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School (Thespian Troupe 410). Directed by Dina Rees Evans.

An All-School Dramatic Adventure

by DINA REES EVANS

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School

ARE you planning to present *Figure It Out* this fall? If you are, you have an exciting adventure before you. There is still need for the sale of War Bonds and for education against the dangers of inflation. Added to the patriotic reason for presenting this really worthwhile show is the opportunity, only too rare, of pulling the whole school together in a project which calls for intense cooperation. You will be amazed what it will do for the morale of the faculty and student body.

The script was written by John McGee, formerly in the Speech Department of Purdue University, and the music was composed by Owen Haynes and Bobby Kroll. It really is good stuff—far better than the average propaganda material that has flooded our desks from the various War departments. If you do not know the script, write to the War Finance Division of the United States Treasury Department, Washington, D. C., and they will send you a copy.

Once having decided to present *Figure It Out*, the first job is one of organization. I urge that the principal of your high school be made the general chairman and that the dramatics teacher be appointed producing director. The following faculty committees will then need to be set up:

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC. You can use both a band and an orchestra.

VOCAL MUSIC. There are many solos, duets, and chorus numbers in the script.

DANCE DIRECTOR. We used a musical comedy precision line, tap, ballet and a modern dance interpretation of industry.

ART AND DESIGN. The production offers a unique outlet for the art department.

COSTUME COMMITTEE. Costumes should be the problem of the Home Economics Department.

PROJECTION AND SOUND DIRECTOR. You can use all of the equipment your school affords.

STAGE MANAGER. A most important position if your cast is large.

PROMOTION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. Necessary to take care of publicity, tickets, ushers, etc. Other student appointment will include the usual book holder,

stage crew, sound operator, make-up committee, etc.

Do not be alarmed by the size of this organization. The script is such that it may be produced elaborately or very simply; but whether your school numbers 2000 or 20, be sure to use as many of the faculty as are available and as many students as possible.

As to scenery, a cyclorama, a few platforms, a traveler curtain, and a motion picture screen is all that is absolutely essential. In our production, with a proscenium opening of sixty-two feet, we encircled the stage with a blue cyclorama. In front of that we set platforms and step units which provided an irregular elevation, the highest level of which was ten feet. In front of these platforms, fifteen feet back from the front curtain line, we hung a star-spangled blue stain curtain on a traveler which we rented from Dramaturgy, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio. Since our stage has a very wide apron, we played many scenes on the fore stage. The motion picture screen was lowered behind the front curtain when it was needed. The effect of our production was spectacular, but the basic plan is so simple that it could be adapted to a stage of almost any size.

The main character is **THE VOICE** and this voice should come over the public address system. If such a system is not already in your school, an amplifying unit

NOW AVAILABLE

A Directory of Plays for All-Female Casts
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can easily be rented. In a tiny auditorium THE VOICE can be located behind scenes and provided with a megaphone. The motion pictures, made especially for *Figure It Out*, will be provided free of charge by the War Finance Division.

The script calls for a scene of adults, presumably citizens, who come out of the audience. We used men of the faculty, who enjoyed the experience immensely; however, the scene would be more effective if you could induce prominent men of the community to participate.

The costumes for our production were made by the Heights Players' Mothers Club and were later sold to the Office of War Finance of Cleveland, from whom they may be rented at a nominal fee by any school in the country. They include costumes for the Squander Bug number, the Double Duty Dollar, and red, white, and blue outfits which we used for a tap dance. Address inquiries to Miss Barbara Fritchey, War Finance Office, Cleveland, Ohio.

Rehearsals were scheduled after school. Each unit rehearsed under its own director. The whole show was put together on Wednesday afternoon exactly three weeks after the first meeting of the production committee. On Thursday evening, a full scale dress rehearsal was staged before an invited audience of seven hundred Bondoliers of the Cleveland Heights War Bond Sales Force. On Friday night the first regular performance was given before a house packed by purchasers of War Bonds. A second performance was presented on Saturday night for a small admission fee to enable all high school students to see the show.

The following is a quotation written by E. E. Morley, principal of Heights High School, for the July, 1944, number of the *School Board Journal*: "There are certain features of this show which should make a strong appeal to high school directors of drama and music. It is written for high school age performers in language they appreciate. The author has caught the spirit of youth and turned their picturesque speech into constructive usefulness. The show also capitalizes on the current War spirit and promotes unity and cooperation throughout the community. It stimulates war-bond sales by showing how inflation can be controlled and war costs financed. It accomplishes these things, moreover, in a natural, wholesome style which leaves a pleasant taste."

Figure It Out offers you not only an opportunity for doing a patriotic service; it gives you an incomparable vehicle for winning the support of faculty and students for your drama department.

Very Stormy Operation

by ALAN SCHNEIDER*

Department of Speech and Drama, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

AFTER a career of eleven weeks in the professional theatre, I must confess that the process of producing a play in New York—at least judging from my experience with Maxwell Anderson's *Storm Operation* and from what I was able to observe and hear about other productions—is indeed a stormy operation. Stormier even than producing a play at the high school or at Catholic University. The miracle is not that some 85% of all Broadway productions fail, but that any of them succeed in running the gamut of casting, rehearsals, out-of-town tryout, and opening night.

The storm begins to brew as soon as casting gets under way. Since the usual high school and college method of open tryouts is, for many reasons (including the overabundance of actors) impractical; Broadway casting is invariably a lengthy, intricate, and fairly haphazard process in which contracts and personality are far more important than talent and persistence. Casting is done almost entirely according to physical types.

Getting a part is accomplished in a variety of ways, chiefly through the efforts of agents—those unseen but highly potent powers behind the proscenium arch. Agents decide which actors to recommend as "the type" for a certain part. A producer generally has an agreement with one or more agents. The agent sends over the actors he thinks might be the types needed and collects a portion of their salaries if they are hired; the producer's secretary is spared the trouble of repeating to large numbers of applicants the inevitable: "Sorry, you're not the type." Then, too, the producer probably has in mind certain performers whose work he has seen previously. And the financial backer of the production knows one or two actors he wants in the show; ditto for the playwright, the director, the business manager, the scene designer, the stage manager, the press agent, and the office boy.

At the same time, the Broadway grapevine is constantly at work although many producers do their utmost to keep casting more or less a secret. Producers particularly frown on *Actors Cues*, a bulletin published daily by C.A.U.S., Inc. (a club and general meeting place for young hopefuls) containing the latest production and casting tips. For an actor to let his copy of *Cues* protrude from his coat pocket while in a producers office is sure poison.

Experienced players almost always work through agents, waiting for the phone to

When Alan Schneider wrote us that he was appearing in the Broadway production of Maxwell Anderson's play, Storm Operation, we lost no time in asking him to write for us an article on how Broadway casts and rehearses its plays. This article is Mr. Schneider's reply. We hope it will please you as it did us.

ring with an offer of a script to look at, or a play-reading to attend, or a role in the next Theatre Guild production. The less successful, however, depend on their daily office-to-office canvassing and on the tips and rumors that float by the theatre marquee and orange-juice stands of Times Square. Let the whisper go out that so-and-so needs a stubby dark John Garfield type, and one hundred would-be Garfields are soon making the walls of the producer's tiny office—as well as the veins in his forehead—bulge.

Producers and directors prefer to take the initiative in casting, and to cast only those actors whose work they have seen and liked. The success story of an unknown from Keokuk who walks into a producer's office and gets the ingenue lead and a Hollywood contract happens oftener in dreams and fiction than in the Sardi Building. Getting even a small part is almost impossible unless the applicant knows someone connected with the production organization. Of the 30 parts in *Storm Operation*, for example, only two or three of the minor roles were filled from the open readings which the director, the former head of the University of Wisconsin theatre, was considerate enough to hold. (Oh, yes, how did I get my job? I knew somebody.)

A typical demonstration of how accidental casting may be occurred a week before the opening of the Anderson play when the director decided we needed six more actors to play Arabs and soldiers. Where did we get them? The stage manager knew somebody, the assistant stage manager knew somebody, we asked Genius, Inc., to send us over the first four tall men who walked in that afternoon. And that was that.

This system—or lack of system—in casting accounts for the indeterminate length of most casting periods. No one can say exactly when casting on a show starts or stops. Usually several weeks or months elapse before all the parts are filled and the players signed. *Storm Operation*, for instance, started casting in August or September; rehearsals began on November 15. Other productions have had to be postponed for long periods, if not abandoned, because suitable actors were not available.

* Mr. Schneider acted in and served as Assistant Stage Manager of last winter's New York production of *Storm Operation*, Maxwell Anderson's drama about the North African campaign.



(Left) Mail time in North Africa as staged in *Storm Operation*. In the usual order, the actors include Michael Ames (who was seen in the motion picture, *Heaven Can Wait*, as Don Ameche's son), Alan Schneider, and Charles Ellis, who played in two other Anderson plays, *Key Largo* and *The Eve of St. Mark*. (Right) Zero hour. Alan Schneider is seen at the extreme right.

Ready For Rehearsal

WITH casting completed, the play is ready to go into rehearsal. The professional theatre's rehearsal period is from three to four weeks, contrasting with the high school or college four to six week period. But the contrast is actually much greater because the professionals' rehearsal day is eight hours long—until a week before production, when it may be extended to twelve or fourteen hours. *Storm Operation* rehearsed from eleven in the morning to seven at night with an hour off for lunch; the week before opening in Baltimore on December 13, we worked from eleven to eleven with time off for two meals. The usual high school rehearsal period—about three or four 2½ hours rehearsals a week for six weeks—rarely adds up to more than 50 or 60 hours. The professional rehearsal schedule—three weeks of seven-hour sessions and a week of ten-hour days—averages a total rehearsal time, exclusive of outside work, of over 200 hours; that is, three or four times as much.

Some plays could and would use even more time were it not for the regulations of Actor's Equity Association, which require the payment of full salary for all rehearsals after four weeks (musicals are, I believe, allowed an additional week). During rehearsals the actors (who must all be Equity members) receive rehearsal expense money of \$20 a week. The minimum pay during the run is \$60 a week—although non-speaking parts (walk-ons) may be paid as low as a few dollars a performance. During the first five days of rehearsals, actors may be dismissed without advance notice or pay (a few generally are) or may resign from the cast.

Rehearsals are held in whatever theatre happens to be available that day. Theatre space being at a premium, rehearsals may be held in the theatre lounge or inner lobby as well as on the stage. *Storm Operation* rehearsals shuttled back and forth from the stage of the Royale Theatre (on

which still stood the set of Elmer Rice's *A New Life*), to a cubby-hole of a room in the Belasco, to the sumptuous lounge of the Ethel Barrymore, finally landing on the roof of the New Amsterdam Theatre—where Ziegfeld once held his famous midnight revues. With the harsh glare of the work-light's single naked bulb throwing massive shadows on the stage walls and out into the cavernous depths of the once ornate auditorium, with actors constantly tripping in the darkness of the vestibule, with energetic ten-year olds shouting and running on nearby roof-tops—the New York Amsterdam was infinitely less glamorous than it had been in the days of Mr. Ziegfeld.

The actual procedure of rehearsals in New York differs only in degree from rehearsals anywhere—although the triple-headed fact that Broadway is painstakingly professional, highly commercial, and tightly unionized always makes itself felt.

Professionals have more time in which to work, a more business-like attitude and greater intensity of effort (the theatre is the professional's bread and butter as well as fun), more attention is given to minute details of character and action. But the process itself is essentially the same.

Professionals, for instance, can afford to indulge in those two or three days of reading rehearsals and preliminary discussions that non-commercial theatre directors are always wishing they had. By the third or fourth day, however, floor plans have been chalked or painted on the stage floor, a motley assortment of battered chairs, stools, and tables establish the playing areas, the director is blocking out the movement and some of the less detailed business of the first scene. In a week or ten days, the stage movement of the entire play has been blocked and re-blocked and set clearly in the minds of the actors; and they are ready to discard their "sides." But even professionals forget lines and business occasionally. This is the time

when the stage manager is kept busy prompting and reminding.

Roughly two weeks after the start of rehearsals, the first complete run-through generally takes place. The director perches himself nervously in the darkness of the auditorium, the stage manager moves his table from stage center to one side, a few of the producer's friends and associates drop in to watch. After the run-through, there is a whispered huddle or two—while the actors mill around on the stage, chattering and drinking cokes—followed by the decision of the powers-to-be: a scene here and there must be completely rewritten or cut out, several sequences are awkward and need restaging, the leading lady's interpretation is muddled, bits of business have crept in where they don't belong, a few entrances will have to be changed. And one of the leading actors will have to be replaced. He isn't the type.

Once all of the changes have been incorporated, the final stage of rehearsals begins: those last two hectic and grueling weeks of hardening and polishing the as-yet rough production. A whole day is spent on smoothing out the second act, another on the crowd scenes and act climaxes. Whenever he can spare the time, the director is having personal conferences with the leading players, suggesting meanings or motives that are not completely expressed in their performances, or trying to work out a compromise on those points where the actor disagrees with the director's interpretation. The professional director is only a limited monarch; he must accomplish his ends by persuasion rather than by dictation.

The final week is a tense and taut seven days, full-up with costume fittings, publicity interviews, preparations for travel, last-minute script and production changes, and one or two regular daily run-throughs of the entire play to straighten out the kinks and establish a sense of continuity. Although the time for experiment and



Scene from a production of *The Black Flamingo* at the Bloomington, Ill., High School (Thespian Troupe 131).
Geneva Allen, Director; Rilda Betts, Business Manager.

change is long past, anything may happen and usually does. In the case of *Storm Operation*, we acquired and had to break in a new leading man one week before the out-of-town opening.

The Tryout Week

THE production should now be ready for the tryout week or weeks out of town (some plays have New York previews instead). That is, except for costumes, lights, sound, props, scenery, and all the eleventh-hour details of production. These are taken care of when the company, somewhat saggy and sooty from the train ride to Baltimore or Wilmington or Boston, assembles on the stage of the local playhouse for last-minute instructions prior to the first dress rehearsal. The actors gape at the scenery for the first time, adjust themselves to real furniture and properties, try out the theatre's acoustics. Then—the allotment of dressing rooms, the scramble of putting on costumes that don't fit or have parts missing, the confusion of a supposedly dark prologue that shows up as bright as high noon in the Sahara or as dark as a camel's insides, the awkward pause that follows a sadly straggling machine-gun effect—all familiar dress rehearsal incidents. But by the second or third or fourth dress rehearsal (which may be actually what the first few audiences see), the machine-gun is completely authentic, the barge scene is properly dim. The curtain rises to unveil the product of four weeks of hard work.

But the hardest work is yet to come. There's a rehearsal called for at eleven tomorrow morning. And when the cast, having just read and re-read the notices over a quick cup of coffee, assembles sleepily at eleven, it soon discovers that the grind has just begun. The second scene of the second act is terribly weak and has to be done over, or the opening is still clumsy and needs work, or the lighting is bad in the wedding scene, or everybody has lost that sense of how hot

North Africa is (and that grease-paint should be applied behind the ears and on the back of the neck), or the second female lead just isn't convincing and "we'd better wire to New York quick for so-and-so!" Or, as happened with *Storm Operation*, the director has resigned, and the New York opening has been postponed indefinitely.

The exact nature and intensity of this tryout period varies, of course, for each play—ranging from a smooth uninterrupted journey of one week, with only one or two rehearsals, no re-writing to speak of, and lots of time to sleep, of an unquestioned hit like *The Voice of The Turtle*; to the desperate week after week of patching and re-patching a piece of theatrical property that seems gradually to be falling apart: re-writing, re-staging, re-casting, re-lighting, etc., etc. But the latter is far more often the case than is the former.

Storm Operation fell somewhere between the two extremes. After the events of the opening week in Baltimore, two additional weeks in Pittsburgh and Cleveland were decided upon as absolutely necessary for changes and polishing. In daily rehearsals that lasted almost until performance time (and sometimes continued after the performance until the early hours of the morning), the new director gradually re-staged and re-interrupted most of the play. Scenes were completely re-written in line with certain audience reactions which the director or playwright had noted the previous evening.

There were sound rehearsals and lighting rehearsals and scene-changing rehearsals and property rehearsals. Lines, bits of business and movement were changed over and over again. The battle to remember what had or had not been changed was particularly acute during one performance in Pittsburgh when a revised version of the first act was played—after only one choppy midnight rehearsal—on a set that had been completely transposed from Right to Left.

And there was one night in Cleveland when a soldier missed his entrance in the barge scene and had to "tread water" to get on stage for his lines.

Throughout that tumultuous period (and the trials faced by *Storm Operation* were at least fairly representative of those which any new play has to weather), the company lives in a tight little universe composed of the hotel, the theatre, a hasty meal at the restaurant next door, the theatre, and the hotel again. The days are alternately tinged with despair and hope, opinion and criticism flourish, tempers flare and tears flow, rumors and rumors of rumors fill the electrically-charged atmosphere. But somehow—thanks to the determination of the actors and the patience of the director and of the long-suffering author—a play does begin to emerge. The players begin to look cheerful again, to crack jokes in the dressing rooms, and think of how nice their pictures will look in next Sunday's *Times*, how wonderful it will be to play in a hit show for once, how delightful New York will be in the spring and summer with their days free—except for two matinees.

And so, finally, back to New York and to two or three days of rehearsals in the theatre where the production is to be housed. Usually there is a performance or two before invited audiences of theatre workers or members of civic organizations. Then the last hurried notes and words of advice, the final instructions as to how long the Muezzin should sound his chant to prayer at the opening of the play, the director's last "pep talk" just before the curtain goes up, the excitement and color of a Broadway opening night.

Comes the dawn, and the notices, and the verdict. And, before long, another company moves into the lobby or on the stage to start its rehearsal schedule, another group of hopefuls begins the long and stormy operation of transforming a few typewritten pages into a spectacle of beauty and wonder and . . . a profitable financial investment. That is, maybe.

Acting As An Observed Art

by C. LOWELL LEES

Director of Dramatics, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

Directors, teachers and students of acting recognize Prof. Lees as the author of the popular textbook, "A Primer of Acting." We are happy to welcome him as one of our contributing editors for this season. Writing under the general subject, "So You Want to Act," Prof. Lees has prepared a series of seven stimulating articles for students of this great and fascinating art. We consider these articles excellent material for club and classroom discussion.*

WHEN you decide you want to act, you usually go to the school play tryouts and ask for some lines to read. If you survive the ordeal of reading lines and are chosen for a role in the play, you proceed to memorize the lines. After the lines are learned, the play is produced. You judge your success as an actor upon your ability to speak the lines without error before an audience.

Unfortunately, most beginning actors identify the speaking of learning lines with acting. Memorization is, however, a very small part of the actor's job. In many European countries the actor does not memorize lines, but depends for them upon the prompter (whom the French accurately enough call the *souffleur* or whistler). Since acting is not memorization, what then is it and what does it entail? It is so complex that we may have to be content with examining some of its major aspects. When done by some, it is truly a fine art, but when performed by most actors, it is a craft composed of skills. In order to arrive at the actor's art of craft we must observe actors at work. Before going to the theatre to watch the actors, let us make a few observations that will help us in determining the actor's art.

Our first observation must be formulated upon our ability to judge the actor. The theatre was made for our enjoyment, we need not have had any special knowl-

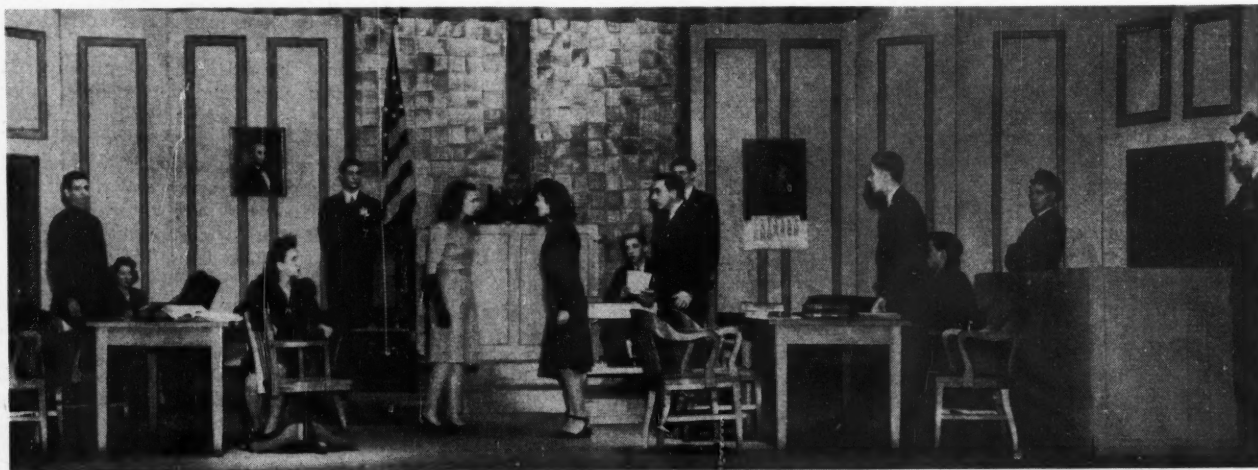
edge or training to enjoy the play. But as our experience in play-going increases and broadens, and our study of the theatre grows, our sense of values becomes keener and our disappointments and satisfactions are sharper. Good acting must appeal to this wide range of experience in play-goers and must somehow satisfy the standard of each member of the audience. You recall that certain actors and plays you used to like now annoy you. About a month ago I saw a movie that I had first seen and liked about twelve years ago but now the acting seemed absurd and ridiculous, and I wondered why I had once enjoyed it. So with whatever degree of experience or knowledge we attend the play the first test of good acting will be, do we like it and how much actual enjoyment does it afford?

Our second observation is that whether you are conscious of it or not you have had rather wide experience yourself in acting. You started when you were very young to impress your family with the greatness of your needs, often you feigned illness to avoid going to school, or you played at high tragedy to get your wishes. Later you dramatized certain events in your life that you wanted to stand out apart from other events. Your dramatized Christmas and other holidays, trips, operations, accidents in order that they would remain memorable highlights. Further you have played at being your father or your mother, your teacher, a policeman, a commando, and any number of other indi-

viduals you have encountered. Even now you may take off peculiarities of associates for the delight of your friends. You rarely relate a story or incident that you do not use some degree of acting to present the characters. In evaluating a work of art you project yourself into the line, mass or color of the object to approximate their strength or weakness. Acting then seems to be a natural life impulse which not only affords us much pleasure but also helps us to evaluate objects about us and to make memorable and emphatic incidents and characters, it is a process that we use in shifting our experience to create new values and meanings.

Our third observation concerns the method of analyzing the acting we are to see. Since acting is so complex, we must have some guide post for observing the thing we see and a common ground for discussing it. To arrive at a method suppose we choose one that is common to all arts. Following this procedure the art is divided into three divisions: (1) the selection of materials to be used, (2) the tools employed to fashion the materials, and (3) the process, by which the tools are used to fashion the materials into an ordered form. In painting the materials are the oils or water colors, and the canvas; the tools are the brushes, and the process is the means the painter uses to make the portrait or landscape. In acting the materials are the lines of the playwright, the suggestions of the directors, and the body of the actor; the tools are the sensitiveness, experiences, and imaginings of the actor; the process is the means he employs to arouse an emotional responsiveness in his audience to the character he creates. In observing acting then we must try to discover how much the actor found in the play, how effective his imagination is, how well he has disciplined his body to respond, his powers of concentration, and the effectiveness of portrayal in making us respond emotionally.

* May be purchased from Prentice-Hall, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.



Night of January 16th as staged at the Benton Harbor, Mich., High School (Thespian Troupe 455). Directed by Miss Margaret L. Meyn.



Rehearsal of an original skit, *Pistol-Packin' Mama*, presented at the annual vaudeville of Thespian Troupe 254 at the B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass. Directed by Barbara Wellington and Elizabeth Leonard.

Watching the Actor Act

NOW with a method of observing the actor, and with some actual acting experience of our own, and with a taste which we cannot exactly define we are ready to go to the theatre. Just one warning, however, before we go. We must watch carefully the actor or we shall lose him in the many arts of the theatre and become so engrossed in the scenery, lighting, play, and the sum total of the theatre magic that we shall forget everything except the story itself. The theatre conspires to so blend its arts in an illusion so vivid and potent that we can't separate acting from scenery, or playwriting from direction.

I would we could choose to observe for our actor Garrick as Hamlet, or Siddons as Lady Macbeth, or Keane as Richard III, or Booth as Iago, or one of our moderns such as Barrymore in *Hamlet*, or Cornell in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, or Hayes in *Victoria Regina*, but it will be a real treat to see any fine actor.

So we are off to the theatre. There is an air of anticipation and excitement throughout the audience as the curtain goes up. We are all attention as we await the appearance of the actor we are to watch intently. Finally, he makes his entrance. To be successful he must quickly transform the audience's attention into an active will to believe with the actor in the role he is portraying. This willingness to make believe is not an acceptance of the acting as reality, but rather an acceptance of the actor's symbols as a medium of participation in the illusion. Although we know the actor to be an American, age forty, we accept the illusion that he is a Frenchman, age twenty. The great Sarah Bernhardt when past seventy, had her leg amputated; in spite of this great handicap, she continued to act and created roles of young women successfully. Our actor achieves the first test by creating the illusion required.

After the illusion has been accepted we have a definite impression formulated in our minds of the actor's character. This first entrance is the criterion by which we judge the consistency of the actor's play-

ing. *The character must unfold throughout the play according to the indications given at the first entrance.* The eighteenth century tearful comedies often presented inconsistent characters, the most notable perhaps was the villainous character, "black, unscrupulous and dastardly," who through four acts commits many "terrible" deeds, yet in the fifth act a woman's tears brings reform and makes him a model Sunday school superintendent. This inconsistency is inherent in the play itself but too often the actor fails to prepare us for the changes that develop in the character. Even in mystery plays where the actor deliberately tries to mislead us, a

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consistency must be present.

Another aspect of consistency is that *the actor's creation must be compatible with life as we know it.* The actor must render life understandable to us. The character must seemingly act logically.

We know from our own experience that when we feign illness or relative incidents, that we will not be believed nor listened to unless there is an authenticity or realism about our actions and speech. Acting on the stage must have a naturalness about it, an alive quality, or it will fail to convince us. Any line or action that seems artificial, or too studied, will fail to convince us and may destroy our illusion. To be natural the actor must seemingly be at ease in the setting, the stage kitchen must seem to be the one he has lived in for many years, or the stage ballroom must seem to be utterly strange to him as if he had never been there before. His wearing of costumes, handling of properties, speaking of lines, must bear an exact impression to us of being natural and appropriate. An actor who tries too hard to achieve an effect of a laugh tires rather than entertains. Our actor seems to excel in these aspects of naturalness, but seems to fail in another, he does not seem quite spontaneous enough. He has played the part so long that he has lost the "first time" quality out of his work. To be truly natural an actor must appear to be thinking his speech for the first time, to have never been through the situations of the play before. There is a danger in lines and actions appearing too memorized or appearing too glib or easy. The first time quality gives thought to action and spontaneous naiveté to acting.

As I watch your reaction to the play and our actor I realize how different we are one from another. This fact makes me understand that perhaps the greatest aspect of naturalness in acting is the personal quality of the actor. We can never see the acting of our actor in any other place playing the role exactly as it is being done now. It is the "youness" with which you endow a character that is important in the theatre. This freshness, this new and individual interpretation is the zest of the theatre.

I note that as the actor appears sad you look sad, you laugh and change emotion as he does. This ability to carry us on from emotion to emotion, to make us respond to the earnestness and simplicity of the emotional experience of the character, is the fine art of the actor. *The degree to which an actor establishes a mood in an audience is the gauge of his ability.*

The curtain is down and we leave the theatre. Perhaps we missed much of the play for we were so intent in observing our actor. But we have found that we can learn much about acting by observing ourselves and others off and on stage. Many of the discoveries we noted about acting were mere restatements of things we already knew. In the next article we will investigate acting as a *created art*.

DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

When It's Period Costume

by LUCY BARTON

College of Fine Arts, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

For some time we have felt the need of publishing in this magazine a series of articles on costumes for the stage, primarily for the benefit of our student readers. It was not difficult to find the person best qualified to prepare these articles for us. Lucy Barton is nationally recognized for her knowledge and research in art of stage costuming. Her book, "Historic Costume for the Stage," stands in a class by itself, for scope of subject matter covered, accuracy of research, and readability. We are extremely pleased, therefore, to offer her series of seven articles this season as the work of an authority. The purpose of these articles is not to provide the producer with all the information he may need for his play, but to arouse in students a genuine desire to learn more about this phase of dramatic work. In this sense, we recommend these articles as material for club and classroom reports and discussions.

THE house lights dim, go out; the curtain rises on two people in a garden, a man and a woman. We, the audience, ready to forget our everyday selves and to share the imaginary life behind the proscenium, want to know how these people are, where they live, how long ago their story took place. Maybe we perused the program while the light was on, but we've pretty well lost the information, what with all the advertisements and the personal chit-chat column and our interest in our neighbors. Therefore, in the first few minutes of the play, we must learn the essentials directly from the actors. One way we shall get it is through the dialogue—what the two say to each other; but the first and most vivid impression comes through the picture—what they look like.

Costume (including make-up) is the means by which an actor gives the first impressions of the character he is portraying. And remember, costume means any clothes he wears on the stage, even modern dress for a "straight" part.

Since actors, professional as well as student, all too often ignore the double truth that modern dress is costume and costume is character, let us look at an example: Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* is modern farce. The leading character is still young and glamorous, as young in her way and as fascinating as the siren who is her son's latest heart-throb. Yet the beautiful dresses of the two women, though equally fashionable, must immediately indicate to the audience the difference in their characters. The same is true of the two young girls, the two young men, the two middle-aged men. What would be right for one member of each pair would interfere with the characterization of the other.

If modern dress must be so carefully chosen to give the accurate first impression, how much more is this true of costume in the play of long ago, or one laid in a foreign land or in phantasy. With such a play, the spectators need to be instructed as well as informed. It is important for them to feel confidence in the truthfulness of what they see, in order to believe, for the time being, that the actor really is a Knight of the Round Table, or a Russian peasant or a witch. Therefore, theatre workers, especially costumers, must

themselves know, and not just guess, at the facts they want to put across, and be able to present those facts in terms of the theatre, to be seen, understood, and enjoyed by the entire audience.

Meaning of Costumes

YOU have often heard, as an excuse for vague, haphazard costuming of a "period" play, "the audience won't know the difference anyway." That may be so, although an audience must be very small indeed that does not include at least one person who spots ignorant lapses from historical or geographical accuracy and is disturbed by them. But that is not the point. The important fact is that costumes either bring out the playwright's idea or they obscure it. If your play is about Russian peasants, it is not about French peasants. The reason for the differences in dress lie deep in the whole background of life in Russia and in France. As this is true of regional costume, so it is equally true of the costume of different historical periods. For one thing is very certain: style in dress is and always has been the result and the expression of a whole way of life. When we have become really familiar with the dress of any people separated from us by either time or space, we have learned also the essentials about their lives. What they wear is influenced by such things as climate, native materials,

religion, sports and pastimes, government, and contact with the rest of the world. Ordinary people in ancient Egypt did not wear fur; ordinary people whom Caesar encountered in the Teutonic forest did. Why the difference? Climate. The Pueblo Indians of our southwest wove blankets only of cotton before the Spaniards came, because they grew cotton plants, but had no sheep before the Europeans introduced them. In the Middle Ages women always wore sleeves down to the wrists, and they generally covered their heads, because the oriental element in Christian dogma brought with it Eastern ideas of feminine seclusion and translated them into terms of Christian modesty. The twentieth century woman's increasing interest in sports and outdoor life has left its mark on all modern dress besides demanding a large number of strictly functional garments; tennis dress, bathing suits, riding togs, the more general play suits and the borderline clothes called "spectator sports." In class-conscious times and places, people can be socially pigeonholed by their dress. Sometimes laws governed by class distinction, as for instance the mediaeval prohibition of ermine to any but the highest nobility; sometimes custom, so that as late as the mid-nineteenth century you could tell a duchess from a shopgirl. One of the clearest indications of the spread of democratic ideals in our own times is the mass-production, low-priced, ready-made dress of a style, if not a quality, as good as that of the high-priced gowns. A student of costume has a good idea of how easily any people communicated with other peoples, by the interchange of items of dress: textiles, raw materials, designs, and details such as hats, shoes, or parasols. The names of garments reveal, too, what foreign influences or events have touched a country at a given time. In the 1860's American women were wearing a separate blouse which they called a "garibaldi." Why? Because it had been inspired by the red shirts of the Italian patriot and his followers.

All these social conditions have to be reckoned with in the writing of any play and are, therefore, the concern of the



Androcles and the Lion as given by the Repertory Players of the University of Michigan. Costumes used in the production were designed by Lucy Barton.

director, the actors, and the technical crews. Leaving out, for the time being, the scenery, the props, and the lighting, in this article and the following six, we shall concentrate on costume, and specifically on European dress from the days of the Greeks and Romans to the twentieth century. We shall limit the discussion to the distinguishing features of each period, whatever makes it different from any other period. With that distinction in mind, you will have something to go on when you are either making or wearing costumes of another day than your own.

Greeks, Romans and Contemporaries

COSTUME of the "classic" period is, perhaps, more misunderstood than that of any other time. Some people just know it can't be as simple as it looks and try to reconstruct it by complex dress-making, thus destroying its character. Others, pleased to discover the extreme simplicity of its basic construction, have thought they could just pin a sheet on anyhow and get away with that. To be sure, the typical garment was a rectangle, but it was woven especially to the wearer's size and large or small according to whether he wanted a long or short body-garment, a large enveloping cloak, or a small scarf. Furthermore, Greek and Roman dress based on this simple rectangle became, under the skilled hands of drapers on sophisticated men and women, clever apparel that expressed the personality of the wearers as no other costume has ever done. To have these draped pieces of cloth look like magnificent attire took (and takes) correct and easy posture maintained with both poise and alertness. Even in those days not everyone was well-dressed, but the ideal of good dressing we can know from the statues of men, women, and gods and from the detective figures on vases and walls. You can costume a play in Greek or Roman style beautifully, appropriately, and without much expense provided you will look at reproductions of ancient art for first-hand information and provided you have clearly in mind what these costumes are not and what they are.

Typically, the garments of the Greeks and Romans were not tailored, that is cut in pieces to fit the figure and sewed together. You will find exceptions, but these are the result of contact with other countries, the early Greeks with Persia and other Oriental lands, the Romans with both the Near East and the barbarian North.

The costumes of the Greeks and Romans were not invariably white. The Greeks especially were devoted to strong, bright colors and patterned materials, and while the white or cream-colored togas of Roman citizens predominated in any crowd, variety was by no means lacking there. Soldiers wore rust-colored tunics, red cloaks, metal armor; high officials displayed purple, and women put no limit to the gay flower-hues of their dresses and mantles. The idea that "classic" is ghost-



A modern construction of Biblical Costume. Based upon Palestinian originals.

white has grown up because most people have seen the sculpture only in plaster reproductions and the frescoes only in black-and-white photographs.

Materials

THE material from which these people made their clothes, and which you should imitate if you wish to picture them truthfully, was characteristically not stiff, like taffeta or paper cambric; not shiny,

like satin; not transparent, like chiffon, voile, or thin cheesecloth. The rare exceptions of semi-transparent silk (sometimes woven with gold threads) only prove the rule. The two typical materials were woolen and linen, in a wide range of weight, from coarse and harsh to fine and soft. They were in general completely opaque. If under Oriental influence a woman's dress was semi-transparent, when she went from home she covered it with

a more substantial cloak. The outstanding quality of all the weaving was its pliability, a feature absolutely necessary in a draped costume. This is the quality you must look for when you shop for material with which to reproduce classic dress. By means of skillful twists, loops, and wrapping and by the addition of clasp pins to hold front to back at the shoulder, the Greeks and Romans, with the help of attendants, covered themselves in ways most suitable to their own figures and to their occupations of the moment. You can learn to produce equally satisfactory results if you will (1) study classic art, not to imitate any special example but to understand the ideals they expressed; (2) study the persons you intend to costume, and the part that person is interpreting; (3) from one or more accepted authorities (see book list at the end of this article) learn about proportions and methods of securing the drapery.

What distinguishes other ancient peoples from the compatriots of Socrates and Cicero? Tailoring. Tailoring in most instances was applied not only to fitted body-garments but also to tubular shapes covering arms and legs, in other words, sleeves and trousers. In varying degrees, this is true of the costume of all the people who enter into the Biblical scene: Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Egyptians, and that race which lived at the crossroads of the ancient world and were affected by the modes of all their successive conquerors—the Hebrews. Along with this tendency to encase, instead of the drape, the torso and limbs, all the Near Eastern groups showed a preference for rich fabrics and much ornamentation. Austerity was no feature of their art or their lives, as it was of Greeks and Romans in the best periods. If you read the prophets of the Old Testament, you will see how much preaching it took to keep the Jews themselves from going all out in Oriental extravagances.

It is not hard to understand and like the costumes of the Ancients. We in our day appreciate as they did garments which follow the contours of the natural figure and do not conceal or falsify its proportions. We like flat heels, even sandals, and bare feet. We have a bright taste in color. Finally, modern clothes, like ancient, look best on people who hold themselves correctly, walk, sit, stand all of a piece, with fluent grace.

Some books to help you:

Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian Costume, Mary G. Houston and Florence Hornblower (A. & C. Black, London, 1920). Good, practical text and clear pictures, some colored.

Oriental Costumes, Their Design and Colors, Max von Tilke (Ernest Wasmuth, Berlin, 1923). Reproductions of actual costumes of the Near East, some Palestinian, colored.

The Old Testament and The New Testament, illustrated by J. J. Tissot (Brunoff, Paris, 1904). Accurate and inspiring.

Historic Costume for the Stage, Lucy Barton (Baker, Boston, 1935).

Costuming the Biblical Play, Lucy Barton (Baker, Boston, 1936).

(Costumes of the Middle Ages will be discussed by Miss Barton in the November issue.)

Early American Society—Comedies

By JULIUS BAB

Roslyn Heights, New York

The Contrast

ON the 16th of April, 1781, the playbill of the John Street theatre, New York, announced *The Contrast*. It marked an event of extreme importance for this was the first American play ever performed in public by a company of professional actors. True, there had been a few American plays published earlier, and some others acted by amateurs, but never before had a professional player-group produced an original American work.

But the play does not derive its significance from the early date alone. *The Contrast*, as a society-comedy, has many assets to establish it as the real beginning of American drama in the world of the theatre.

Royall Tyler, the author, was born in Boston in 1756, the son of a wealthy family. His brother was one of Washington's staff officers, and Royall himself saw some military duty. He was a learned man and a lawyer. Governor Bowdoin sent Tyler into New York State to negotiate Shays, who had led "Shays' Rebellion" in Massachusetts, and then escaped across the border. The Governor's choice was an auspicious one for the American theatre, for it was on this trip that Tyler saw a theatrical presentation for the first time in his life—Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, performed in the old John Street playhouse. The performance so thrilled the young lawyer, that he was inspired to write an American play in the same style—and three weeks later he had composed *The Contrast*.

The contrast referred to in the title is between real Americans and New York's high society, loafing on the Battery and strolling in the Mall, the then fashionable promenade near Trinity Church. There is no denying the influence of Sheridan when Tyler depicts the American *haute monde*, educated by European standards and living by Continental morals, taking interest only in fashion and gossip. The flippant Dimple and the paltry Charlotte are his main examples with their speeches laden with quotations from Lord Chester-ton's renowned but frivolous book.

Colonel Manly and Marie, nourished by the new literature of the "bourgeoisie", written by Samuel Richardson and Jean Jacques Rousseau, represent the opposite side—the grave and sentimental. To be sure their thinking springs mainly from the spirit of the time in leaning toward European authors, but there is a definite American tinge to their thought. Colonel Manly not only eulogizes Washington and

This is the first of seven articles by Dr. Bab on outstanding plays which have made history on the American stage. In later articles Dr. Bab will discuss the following plays: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Copperhead*, *The Gladiator*, *Rip Van Winkle*, *Becky Sharp*, *Saratoga*, *Griffith Davenport*, *The Scarecrow*, *The Great Divide*, *The Hairy Ape*, *The Show-Off*, and *Barbara Fritchie*.

Lafayette, but exults in the "noble principle of patriotism." He rejects the blind admiration for everything European saying, "I can never esteem the knowledge valuable which tends to give distaste for my native country." He states succinctly, "I love my country," and though admitting America may yet have many faults, he exclaims: "America—I mean the United States have displayed virtues and achievements which modern nations may admire."

But the most wonderful creation of the play is *Jonathan*! Jonathan, who is Colonel Manly's "waiter" (by no means a servant), proudly declares that though he has to black boots, "I am a true blue son of liberty"—"No man shall master me—my father has as good a farm as the Colonel." Jonathan is a country lad and provides hilarious scenes when he tries to make love to a city girl following the rules set down by a city friend, and when he attends the theatre and takes the situation of the play for reality. But Jonathan is not a simpleton and proves his loyalty to his employer, springing to the defense of the Colonel with flying fists.

This Jonathan, prototype of the New England Yankee, is the immortal part of Tyler's play. Possibly the name "Jonathan" was a household word when the play was produced, since Washington often spoke of "Brother Jonathan," referring to Jonathan Trumbull, excellent governor of Connecticut. But it was certainly *The Contrast* that finally made Jonathan a popular character in American life and then a symbol of the nation similar to the present-day "Uncle Sam." Later many other playwrights incorporated Jonathan into their plays.

Thomas Wignell played the role of Jonathan in the 1787 presentation while Lewis Hallam, Jr., and John Henry, the managers of New York's John Street playhouse, acted Manly and Dimple. Wignell's success was so great that Tyler dedicated the copyright of the play to the actor, insisting that his own name should not appear on the frontispiece. This was accomplished and the author is referred to only in a short remark, "Written by a citizen of the United States." This oc-



Helen Freeman as Seraphina in the Provincetown Players production of the play, *Fashion*, in 1924.

curred in 1790 when the play was first published, though a subscription list was made up much earlier. "The President of the United States" headed the list of 350 subscribers with such other famous names as Robert Morris, Edmund Randolph of Virginia, Secretary of War Knox, General Steuben, and Aaron Burr. With these names on the list there can be no doubt that *The Contrast* had unheard-of success. The play went to Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and Williamsburg. The last professional public performance was in Boston in 1795.

Probably it was impossible to keep *The Contrast* on the stage any longer. The plot was poor—intrigues and naggings among lovers were not new even then. The technique of the comedy with its long monologues for the benefit of the audience who had to grasp the relations between the persons and exits and entrances for no definite reasons, are highly antiquated. Thus the play disappeared from the stage for the entire 19th century. Only at the turn of the century when people became interested in the history of the old American theatre was the play revived, and then by amateurs in New York in 1899. Later performances were given in 1912 in Brattleboro, Vermont; in 1917 in New York, and in 1919 in Philadelphia and Boston. The most recent performances were held in 1939 by the Dartmouth Players, and in 1940 in the Dock Street Theatre of Charleston, So. Carolina.

The high rank of *The Contrast* among early American plays is incontestable. William Dunlap, "The Father of the American Theatre," returned from London in 1787, saw *The Contrast*, and was deeply impressed. He painted (for he was an artist, too) a picture of the main scene, and under its influence, later wrote

comedies for the American stage himself.

Royall Tyler continued to write poetry and plays, but with none of the success of *The Contrast*. And all this was but the avocation of a man successful as a jurist, highly esteemed by his fellows and followers until he died in 1826.

I think American theatre groups might still often honor his memory by a performance of *The Contrast*.

* * *

Fashion

MORE than half a century passed before the United States had another society-comedy that was strong enough to survive its generation. On the 24th of March, 1845, the Park Theatre, New York, produced *Fashion*, by Anna C. Mowatt.

The conflict in *Fashion* does not essentially differ from that of *The Contrast*. Again rich New York society is presented in opposition to true Americans. Gossip, however, ("scandal" in Sheridan's manner), is not quite so important in the later play. Prudence, "a maiden lady of a certain age," is the only character who cultivates it. She seems to be created under the influence of Belise in Moliere's *Les Femmes Savantes*; and the whole circle surrounding Mrs. Tiffany recalls French comedy with its foolish fops and poets. But Mrs. Tiffany's main interest is neither scandal nor erudition; it is Fashion! (Fashion as the engendering power of society life was often mentioned in *The Contrast*.)

"*Fashion*," according to Adam Trueman, an old farmer who visits Mrs. Tiffany's circle, "is an agreement between certain persons to live without using their souls." Mrs. Tiffany adores fashion imported from Paris—dresses, furniture, manners,

and language, too. But she understands neither the manners nor the language. She says "ee-light" for "e-lite;" "foor-tool" meaning "fauteuil;" and "jenny says quoi" for "je ne sais quoi." She falls under the influence of, and is cheated by a "French Count," who is neither French nor Count, but a cook who lived in France for a time. The imposter schemes to marry Miss Tiffany to her mother's great delight. Mr. Tiffany, however, wishes to marry his daughter to his clerk, because, financially exhausted by his wife's "fashion," he has forged bills of exchange, and his clerk, knowing of it, has been blackmailing him. This situation makes for action, tension, and thrill, but is only one part of the plot.

The other part revolves around "Gertrude," a girl appointed to teach music to Mrs. Tiffany. After many complications Gertrude is revealed as the grand-daughter of the rich farmer of Gatteraugus, Mr. Trueman, the catalytic agent. Trueman exposes the "Count" who admits he played the nobleman because "I heard that in America you pay homage to titles, while you profess to scorn them"—that is the America of *Fashion*. But Mr. Trueman responds in the spirit of true America: "We have kings, princes, and nobles in abundance—of Nature's stamp!"

There is not so nice and hearty an invention as Jonathan in *Fashion*, but there is more movement and a more realistic technique. The exits and entrances are justifiable. There are fewer monologues, and only a few "asides" for the convenience of the author. Therefore it is not surprising to see this later comedy more successful in the long run.

Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt, the author of *Fashion*, was a sort of infant prodigy. Born in France (Bordeaux, 1819) but of American parents named Ogden, she was but ten years old when she began to write verses and plays in New York. At fifteen she married Mr. Mowatt, a lawyer, then, threatened with tuberculosis, traveled for some years in Europe. Back in America she continued to work for the stage and *Fashion* turned out to be her great success. (Edgar Allan Poe wrote an appreciative piece on the play as dramatic critic of the *Broadway Journal*.)

The original cast at the Park Theatre had no famous names, but after Mr. Mowatt lost his fortune, Mrs. Mowatt turned actress in the role of Gertrude. Later the famous E. L. Davenport made one of the most successful characterizations. He and Mrs. Mowatt also produced *Fashion* in London.

Mrs. Mowatt continued to act until 1854. She then wrote a very amusing autobiography and, after Mr. Mowatt's death in 1851, married Mr. Ritchie, a Richmond newspaper publisher. She died in 1871, but *Fashion* lived after her. In 1924 the Provincetown Players revived the play, and since then it has been done in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and many other places. And assuredly it will appear again!

Help Yourself*

by VIVIAN FLETCHER

A War Savings Radio Script for Junior and Senior High School Production

Cast: 4 boys, 3 girls.
Time: Fifteen minutes.

Jackson: Help Yourself!

Announcer (Lightly.): That's right, folks. You're the only one who can. And the students of . . . High School will tell you the whys and hows as they present—Help Yourself!

Music: (Lively . . . up briefly and out.)

Jackson: Some people have the idea that when fellows and girls are in high school nothing ever goes on inside their heads except pinwheels. But, we do a lot of thinking nobody ever knows about. Oh, maybe we don't start out cooking on the front burner but we get there. Take this business of whatever's going to become of us, for instance. Four of us were churning our brains about that the other afternoon. It was after school and we were down in assembly hall. I was stirring up a little rhythm on the piano. . . . (Sneak in.)

Music: (Piano music . . . something modern and played well . . . hold very low under.)

Jackson: . . . and the other three were just sitting around, letting ideas wander in one cranium and out another. There was Bill—he's a senior who'll be graduating this year so it was only natural he should be thinking . . .

Bill (Thoughtfully.): Next year, this time, I'll probably be bombing Tokyo to bits, if the war isn't over by then. Do you kids ever wonder what things will be like when it is over?

Connie: You mean what kind of a world we want—after peace is made?

Jackson (Low.): Connie's a junior so naturally what she was thinking about was romance.

Connie: Maybe I'm just the domestic type but I want to get married and have one of those super-colossal post-war homes they're always talking about.

Jackson: Me being a sophomore, naturally I was thinking about my career. Carnegie Hall, I was thinking, start sweeping out the cobwebs. Cause when this war is finished and I've had a few years at conservatories, old Jackson will be right in the music-maker's groove.

Music: (Up for a couple of seconds then fade out under.)

Giggles: (Giggles.)

Jackson (Superior.): Giggles was a freshman and I might say that being a frosh naturally she wasn't thinking of anything. But I won't because even freshmen are people and a girl like Giggles could happen to any class.

Giggles (Giggling.): I think things will be absolutely terrific after the war. (Enthusiastic.) Everything will be new and exciting—you can have lots of new clothes and you'll be able to travel all over the world. That's what I want to do—travel to strange new places and do things.

Bill (He's concerned with the bigger aspects of the new world.): We ought to travel and get to understand other countries if we're going to live with them without having another war. Boy, I'd like to have myself a plane I could hop into when I felt like it and take off for India, or Moscow . . .

Connie: I'll bet you wouldn't want to be flying off to strange places if you had a house like the one I'm going to have. (Dreamily.) Glass sides to let in the sunshine, air-conditioned and soundproof . . .

Jackson: You can have it. All I want is a piano and somebody to listen when I get to be the Sinatra of the keyboard.

Giggles: I'll come to hear you. I'm crazy about music.

Bill: I'll probably be too busy with my business.

Jackson: What business will you be in?

Bill: I haven't decided yet. But it'll be my own. (Thoughtfully.) And it will be something that does some good for people. . . . Maybe I'll discover a new medicine to combat disease . . . or find some way of regulating climate so people could live in comfort at the North Pole or the Equator.

Connie: I hope everybody gets a house of his own and nobody has to live in slums anymore. If people have beautiful homes to live in they'll be better citizens.

Jackson: Not without education, they won't. Only there ought to be a new kind. Not just reading about things in books, but doing stuff yourself. And adults need educating too. I'd have places for them to catch up on things. And I'd make education free. If a fellow like me wants to go to college and music school, for instance, he'll be able to whether he has the money or not.

Giggles: And there'll be more time for having fun and enjoying life. (Giggling.) Everybody will go in for sports and we'll go to the theatre . . .

Jackson: And concerts.

Connie: And plant beautiful flower gardens . . .

Bill: And maybe have laboratories of our own where we can putter around and make things.

Music: (Fews bars of "Beautiful Dreamer" or "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles.")

Connie (Over.): Do you suppose the future really will be like that?

Giggles: Why not?

Bill: Sure. What are we fighting this war for? To get a better world—new horizons and all that stuff.

Jackson: I'll bet it doesn't happen overnight though.

Connie: When will it, do you suppose? In ten years maybe?

Bill: Why not?

Connie: Do you think by then we'll have all the new discoveries they keep promising in the magazines? Silk stockings that won't run . . . vitamins to make you live longer . . . ?

Bill: Sure. When the war is over, business will stop war production and start in on peace production. It stands to reason.

Voice (Coming in . . . more mature than the others. Preferably a boy. Pleasant, but serious.): I hope you're right.

Jackson: Where did you come from?

Connie (Whisper.): I've never seen him around before, have you?

Bill: No. Who are you anyway?

Voice: Nobody much. (Significantly.) Yet.

Bill (Disgusted.): What's all the mystery?

Jackson: If you're going to barge in on our conversation, you might at least introduce yourself.

Voice: Well, that's a little difficult. You see I'm—what you might call—a spirit.

Giggles (Frightened.): A spirit?

Voice: Oh, nothing to be frightened of, I assure you. Perhaps I should have said—a personality.

Bill: Well, spirit or personality—whatever you are—you must have a name.

Voice: No—not exactly. I'm just 1954.

Connie: Who?

Giggles: 1954?

Jackson: Hey!

Voice: I'm Ten Years From Now. One year in that Future you've been talking about. And what I wanted to say was that I hope I can look forward to the pleasant existence you're anticipating. However, it takes more than dreaming to make such a world come true.

Connie: What do you mean?

Bill: Yes, what does it take?

Voice: First of all we have to win the war. And that means sacrifices—all kinds. It means laying a firm economic foundation.

Giggles: What's he talking about?

Voice: Maybe I can explain it best with War Bonds.

Jackson: What have War Bonds got to do with the kind of future we want?

Voice: Everything.

Jackson: Go on. We know it's patriotic to buy war bonds—they help pay for the war but . . .

Voice (Picking it up.): They're also a down payment on your future. If you want something ten years from now the best way to get it is to make a down payment on it now with War Bonds. And to keep paying for it in easy installments of more War Bonds.

Jackson: Sure. We know that. You buy a \$37.50 bond today and ten years from now it's worth fifty bucks.

Giggles: Enough for a trip somewhere (giggling) or some new clothes.

Connie: Or part of a house or airplane.

Voice: Yes, but it's even more important than that. You see, not only will your bonds buy those specific things for you, they'll lay the broad foundation for that new world you were just talking about.

Bill: How do you figure that?

Voice: If you spend money needlessly now when goods are scarce you simply boost inflation and that means you are not getting full value for your dollar. If you buy bonds with it, your money gives double value. It helps pay for the war. . . .

Jackson: That's what I said.

Voice: And it also builds up reserves to maintain our economy when the war is ended.

Giggles: What does that mean?

Voice: It means that War Bonds will help keep production and employment on an even level so that instead of going through a depression after the war we can start right off on the business of making the new world you're looking forward to.

Jackson: O.K. So what? We're buying bonds.

Bill: Sure, if that's all it takes, the Future's set.

Voice: Ah, but wait a minute. How many bonds are you buying? As many as you can? Or as many as you have money for after you get through buying all those unnecessary little things you just like to have?

Bill: Like what, for instance?

Connie: Yes. What do you consider unnecessary?

Voice: Anything you can possibly do without for the duration.

Jackson: That's a pretty big order.

Voice: So is that new world you've just dreamed up. You want it, don't you?

Jackson: Sure, but—(Getting the idea.) Say—I just thought of something!

Connie: What?

Jackson: He's been holding out on us!

Voice: How have I been holding out on you?

Jackson: Well, here we sit talking about what the future might be. If you're 1954, you can tell us.

Bill: Sure.

Giggles: That's right.

Bill (Eagerly): Will I have my plane and my business?

Connie (Eagerly): Will I have my house?

Jackson (Eagerly): Will I be a great pianist?

Giggles: And will I be able to travel and have beautiful clothes and things?

Voice: I was just going to ask you.

Jackson: Huh?

Bill: I don't get it.

Voice: I don't know. What the Future is going to be like is up to you.

Connie: You mean it isn't already planned?

Voice: Of course not. That's why I brought up this War Bond business. I want to insure my future too. But it's in your hands.

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Bill: (Suddenly understanding and liking the idea.): You know—he's right. It's funny I never thought of it before.

Giggles (Giggling.): That makes us pretty important people.

Connie (Impressed.): Yes.

Voice: Well—I've got to get started. Which road shall I take?

Bill: What do you mean?

Voice: There are two of them. One leads to one future and the other to an entirely different one. It's up to you which I take.

Bill: But how do we know? We can't see which is which.

Giggles: I wish we could. (Giggling.): It would be exciting to get a look at the future and see what we'll be doing ten years from now.

Voice: Nobody can predict any future. Too many things are involved. But the way things look now, this is what you might be doing in 1954 if I take the spending road:

Sound: (Crash of cymbals, followed by—)

Music: (Few mystic chords of music.)

Sound: (Sneak in heavy rain and hold low under.)

Bill (Depressed and disgusted.): Rain! That's all I need to make me feel like a complete washout.

Connie (Bumping into him.): Oh—I'm sorry.

Bill (Disagreeable.): Why don't you watch where you're going?

Connie (Apologetic.): I had my umbrella down low and . . . (Suddenly recognizing him.) Bill! Is that you?

Bill (Surprised.): Connie!

Connie: What's happened to you? You look so . . .

Bill (Bitterly.): I look like a wreck. I know. So long.

Connie: Bill . . . wait! You can't go off like that. Where have you been these last two years? Why did you disappear the way you did? I thought you were in love with me and that we were going to get married some day.

Bill: So did I, but a guy can't get married unless he has a decent job and some prospects for the future. I couldn't provide a one-room apartment for you let alone that super-colossal house you've always wanted.

Connie (Sighing.): I guess that was just a beautiful dream. Things certainly didn't turn out the way we hoped, did they?

Bill (Bitterly.): I was going to have my own business—something that would help humanity! And I was going to ride all over the world in my little old plane. What a laugh!

Connie: Let's go inside some place where we can talk, Bill. You'll catch cold standing out here in the rain. We can get a cup of coffee in this diner.

Bill (Reading the sign.): Jackson's Diner. Say, that isn't the boy who used to play the piano, is it?

Connie: Uh-huh. People don't care much about concerts these days but they still eat. He had some War Bonds saved up and when they matured he opened this diner. Let's go in.

Sound: (Door opened and closed . . . Rain out.)

Music: (Piano music . . . Breaking off as they come in.)

Connie (Coming in.): Hello, Jackson.

Jackson: Oh, it's you, Connie. Had only one customer so I thought I'd limber up my fingers. She doesn't mind.

Giggles (Off mike . . . crying.): I love music. Connie: You still keep your piano, I see.

Jackson: You bet. Things have got to get better some day.

Bill: You think so, eh, Jackson?

Jackson: Say . . . you aren't . . . Bill! Our old high school valedictorian . . . Centerville's ace pilot of World War II . . . welcome home!

Bill: Stow it before I blow my top.

Connie: He's been having a tough time.

Jackson: Down on your luck, huh?

Bill: Down on the world.

Giggles (Off mike . . . crying.): Me, too.

Original Scripts

DRAMATICS MAGAZINE will welcome for publication original one-act plays which stress democratic principles and co-operation in the postwar period. Plays which deal with such problems as tolerance, racial justice, the four freedoms, and better understanding of other peoples, adapted to production needs of educational theatre groups, are especially wanted. Manuscripts should be typed and properly addressed. Sufficient postage for their return should be included.

Connie: Who's that?

Jackson: You remember . . . Giggles.

Connie (Shocked.): I didn't recognize her. What are you doing with yourself these days, Giggles?

Giggles (Coming in.): Working. That's all I ever do—work, work, work from morning to night, for a few measly little dollars.

Connie: You were the girl who wanted to travel—all over the world.

Giggles (Disgusted.): I travel, all right—from Maple Avenue downtown to the office—via street car—twice a day. The kind of traveling I'll probably be doing for the rest of my life.

Bill: What was it we were fighting the war for? The four freedoms? Where are they? That's what I'd like to know.

Jackson (Quietly.): I guess we killed them off with our greed, and carelessness, and waste. If only everybody had saved when we had money—if we'd only listened when they warned us about inflation and foolish spending.—(Sighing.) Oh well—let's have something to eat and forget it. Sorry I haven't anything fancy to offer, but anything you see is on the house. Connie, Giggles—what'll you have? How about you, Bill?

Bill: What will I have? A chance to go back and do these last ten years all over again. Yes sir, that's what I'll have. . . . A chance to save for the kind of life we used to dream about.

Sound: (Crash of cymbals followed by—)

Music: (Same mystic chords of music.)

Bill (Coming in . . . very cheerful.): Well, Connie, I'm home. Is dinner ready?

Connie (Happy.): It certainly is. And your favorite.

Bill: Not steak with french fries?

Connie: Nothing else. And done just the way you like it. This new stove takes care of that. I simply put food in, turn the proper knobs and the meal does itself.

Bill: Where's young Billy?

Connie: Outside playing. You can see him from the big window.

Bill: Is his cold better?

Connie: It's gone.

Bill: You mean the doctor gave him that new treatment.

Connie: Uh-huh and he thinks Billy won't be bothered by any further attacks. Remember when a cold just had to run its course and people said there'd never be a cure for it?

Bill (Lightly.): A lot has happened since then. And that reminds me. You'll never guess who I ran into this morning on my business trip down in South America.

Connie: Who?

Bill: A girl who went to high school with us. Pretty—and crazy about travelling.

Connie: You don't mean Giggles?

Bill: That's right.

Connie (Eagerly.): Where was she? What did she look like? What's she doing?

Bill: She's living at a fashionable resort where I had lunch. Her husband is in some international business and she travels with him. She's also become quite a recreation leader. She asked to be remembered to you.

Connie: Speaking of old friends, it's almost time for Jackson's television program.

Bill: Well, let's hear it.

Music: (Piano . . . fading in . . . hold briefly then fade low under.)

Bill: There he is.

Connie: He looks real enough to reach out and touch. Don't you feel as though you should speak to him?

Bill: Maybe some day we'll be able to. I understand they're working on a two-way system for radio.

Connie: So listeners can talk back, you mean?

Bill: Yes. Maybe they'll be able to do the same thing with television.

Connie: We've certainly come a long way in the last ten years.

Bill: That's what I was thinking last week when I was in China. Some plane loads of prefabricated houses had arrived and you should have seen the faces of those happy families as they put them up and moved in. It made your heart feel good.

Connie: I read in the paper this morning that the Congress of Nations is meeting to discuss the allocation of food. Production has been so good this year there's more than enough for the whole world. The only problem they have to work out is the distribution.

Bill: I guess it's worth all the sacrifices we had to make during the war. Remember how we used to work and save to buy War Bonds?

Connie (Laughing.): I certainly do. And I remember that afternoon we first realized how important they were to our future. We were sitting down in assembly hall (fading) remember . . . ?

Sound: (Crash of cymbals and mystic music again.)

Voice: Well, kids, which will it be—the spending road or the war savings road?

Jackson: Are you kiddin'?

Connie: That's what's known as a rhetorical question.

Giggles: Take the savings road.

Bill: Sure. We're not . . . ons.

Voice: That's the kind of future you want, is it?

Jackson: You bet.

Connie: Naturally.

Giggles: Of course.

Voice: What you saw was exaggerated, of course. Both ways.

Jackson: Sure, we know that.

Bill: But we got the general idea. Saving and putting all we save into War Bonds will do a lot toward getting us the kind of future we want.

Voice: Yes. It certainly will. The future depends upon a lot of things we do during and after this war but buying War Bonds now is one of the most important. And remember, if you just do a half-way job—buying Stamps and Bonds when it doesn't hurt—you'll get a half-way kind of future. For an all-out new world, you'll have to go all-out too. The more War Bonds you buy and hold, the bigger stake you'll have in the kind of future you want.

Music: (Piano goes into few bars of America The Beautiful . . . Up briefly fading under.)

Jackson: You see, what I mean? Maybe we don't start out right on the beam but we get on it. All we knew when we started on our thinking marathon was what we wanted. Now we know one of the things it takes to get it. And I'm not just woofin' when I say nobody's fooling us about these War Bonds. Sure they help pay for the war and buy guns and ammunition and all the rest of it. But we know now that the one you help most by buying War Bonds is yourself. They're your down payment on the kind of future America can be proud of.

Music: (Up briefly fading under.)

Announcer: You have been listening to a play called *Help Yourself* presented by _____ High School. The part of Jackson was played by _____. The Voice of the Future was _____. Bill was _____, Connie was _____, Giggles was _____ and the Barker was _____.

Music was furnished by _____ and the play was under the direction of _____.

Music: (Up briefly and out.)

Professor Frederick H. Koch Passes Away

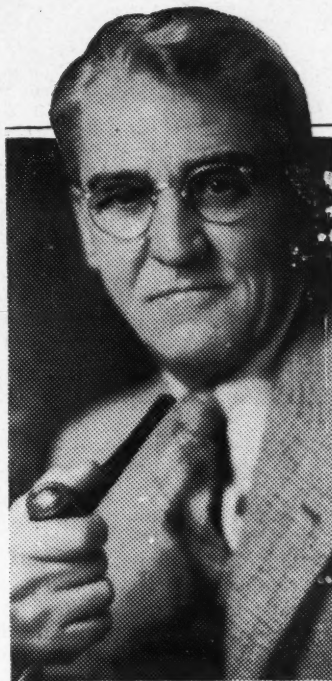
ON August 16, Professor Koch, director of the Carolina Playmakers, head of the Department of Dramatic Arts at the University of North Carolina, teacher, scholar, author, and gentleman, passed away while traveling in Florida. Professor Koch achieved international fame for his successful work in teaching students to write and produce folk drama. Hundreds of writers and dramatics directors experienced their first work in the drama under his master hand. Among the many pupils of Professor Koch who have achieved distinction are Paul Green, George V. Denny, Betty Smith, William Woods, and Wilbur Stout to whom we are indebted for the following remarks addressed to his great teacher and friend.

—EDITOR.

"Proff" Koch

By WILBUR STOUT

Director, College Theatre, Mississippi Southern College;
Hattiesburg, Miss.



DR. FREDERICK H. KOCH

SOMETIMES, but not always, Proff, we used to find you in Chapel Hill—when we oldtimers came back in summer to stare at the new buildings, to drink another sip at the old well, and of course to stand in a dark house and people an empty stage with scenes long past.

More often you were not there, but away on some far expedition to climb mountain peaks in the Rockies, to hike along the sandy trails of the Carolina coast, or to teach in a remote summer school and, like Johnny Appleseed, to plant good seed in good soil. In the old days, that's the way it had to be. Sometimes we wrote you a letter, and after a while your answer would come back. Now this new business of yours, Proff, this going away again, will make things a little different for all of us.

It seems a pity you will not be in Chapel Hill for people who need something, and come to the University to get something. I can see them digging diligently in that roomful of big scrapbooks, reading all the clippings, looking at play programs, and transcribing bits of information to their notebooks. They will not find you that way, Proff. They will not find you in a roomful of papers and souvenirs. All they can possibly get will be scraps of history, and very little to refresh the soul.

Refreshing the soul, you know, used to be your major occupation.

Of course not all those who knew Abraham Lincoln had his gift of putting aside condescension, and feeling superior to none. Likewise not all who knew you could share your access to the same greatness. What most of us wanted was to be up in the world, up high, up high enough certainly to look down upon the poor peasants. What you wanted, for yourself and for us, was to look up—with wonder, with delight, and with gratitude for a great blessing. For you there was always satisfaction in the coves and smoky ranges, in the prairie deep with snow or rich with summer flowers, in the stormy seas off Hatteras, or in clods of the great earth-bound enigma.

What you wanted for us, your students, was an honest pride in common clay, the greatest medium in which an artist ever worked. It was that part, Proff, we didn't understand. The clay we knew was on our shoes when we came to college. We aimed to get rid of it then, and keep it off later.

How foolish was that ambition!

You remember, of course, that trip you made to North Dakota, after about 35 years in folk playmaking, to deliver their commencement address and to receive the honorary degree, Doctor of Literature. But a much smaller token impressed me greatly at the time. Someone out there had gathered for you a lump of common Dakota mud, and with ceramic art had fashioned a tobacco jar adorned with a prairie rose.

There—in the actual event, in the very miracle itself—was beauty emerging from the soil, forever new and wonderful!

The symbol is complete. No words could be more eloquent.

Statistical Summary of the 1943-44 Thespian Season

(This summary is based upon data submitted by 374 of the 605 high schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society as of August 1, 1944. It does not include productions of non-member schools which subscribe for *Dramatics Magazine*.)

Total number of major productions reported as of August 1, 1944..... 859*
Average number of major productions per school reporting..... 2.30
Estimated number of major productions given by all schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society during 1943-441,392
Distribution of number of productions among schools reporting:

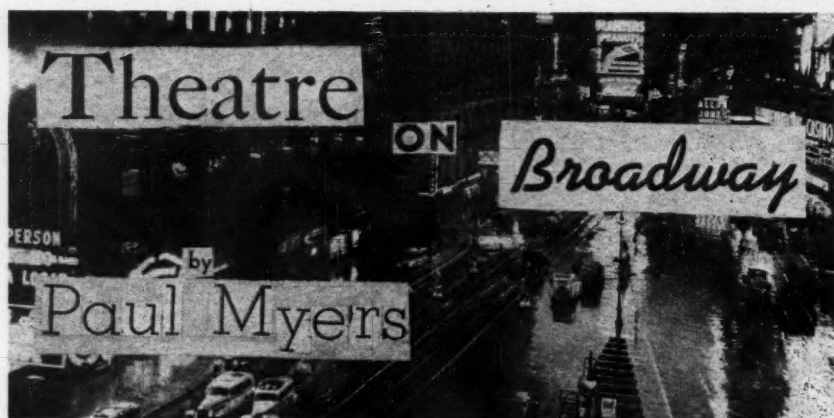
Schools	Number of Major Productions
5	0
79	1
170	2
93	3
19	4
7	5

Total number of operetta productions reported as of August 1, 1944..... 45
Total number of variety shows, revues, vodvils, pageants, minstrel shows, bond shows, choric festivals, etc..... 278
Total number of one-act play productions reported as of August 1, 1944..1,492
Estimated number of one-act play productions given by all schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society during 1943-442,440
Number of schools reporting participation in drama festivals and contests (chiefly intra-school, local and county events) during season..... 55
Number of schools reporting participation in radio activities during season. 67
Number of schools reporting production of evenings of one-act plays during season 48
Most frequently produced full-length plays among Thespian schools reporting as of August 1, 1944:

Title	Number of Productions
Brother Goose	24
Don't Take My Penny.....	22
Ever Since Eve.....	22
Best Foot Forward.....	21
Junior Miss	17
The Fighting Littles.....	15
Every Family Has One.....	13
Letters to Lucerne.....	12
Thumbs Up	11
You Can't Take It With You. 10	
The Eve of St. Mark.....	10
Nine Girls	9
Out of the Frying Pan.....	9
And Came the Spring.....	9
Plane Crazy	8
Seven Sisters	8
Arsenic and Old Lace.....	8

*These figures include evenings of one-act plays considered the equivalent of full-length productions, but do not include operettas, pageants, musical shows, and other special programs.

"The biggest discovery I made as a beginner was that dramatics is one of the most democratizing forces on the campus. Whatever barriers may under other circumstances separate student from student, all drop here. Social distinctions are sloughed off as overalls or grease paint are put on. The easy give and take, the thoughtfulness and tolerance, the marvelous spirit of cooperation were a revelation to me."—Prof. T. C. Dunham writing in *Field Notes of Theta Alpha Phi*.



AFTER enjoying two summers of unusual activity in 1942 and 1943, the New York theatre finds itself this year in a state of listlessness typical of the pre-war summers. Late spring reports led us to expect brisk activity during July and August. At that time there was an acute theatre shortage—several new productions being unable to open because of the inability of securing a theatre. Gasoline rationing and other transportation difficulties have reduced the number of summer playhouses to less than a handful. These factors, abetted by the constant influx of service men and women into the city, seemed to indicate that the theatre would enjoy a boom. With the advent of July's heat, however, one after another of the productions, closed or suspended performances during a vacation period. At the present time there are seventeen productions playing (a figure subject to extremely sudden change), which means that only half of the theatres are occupied.

Since the first of August there have been three new productions—all of a kind. These are: *School for Brides*, in which Roscoe Karns has reappeared after a long absence in Hollywood; *Catherine Was Great*, written by and starring Mae West; and *Good Morning, Corporal*. All of these plays are built about time-worn themes, and have been accorded adverse critical reception.

The most important of the summer's productions is a play of Elsa Shelley's, rather tawdrily entitled, *Pick-up Girl*. It is, however, a well-written, dramatic study of juvenile delinquency. This is a theme that could seem most lurid and in extremely bad taste, unless it is skillfully handled. Miss Shelley does just this, and the result is both good theatre and a valuable exposé of one of contemporary society's most pressing problems.

The entire play is set in a Juvenile Court during the hearing of Elizabeth Collins—a typical case. Representatives of the various causes contributing to the problem of delinquency are called as witnesses. The result is not an overly sensational court-room melodrama, as so many plays of this type have been, but an intensely dramatic social document. William

Harrigan, as the Judge, and Pamela Rivers, as Elizabeth Collins, enact the principle roles most creditably. It is to be hoped that the producers of *Pick-Up Girl*, Michael Todd's staff, will send the production on a country-wide tour when it has completed its New York engagement, so that all of us can see it.

Late in June, Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians* opened at the Broadhurst Theatre. It was received most cordially and has been running very successfully. At the present moment it looks as though it will play well into the new season, and then tour several of the larger cities about the United States.

This play, by its very structure, seems lacking in the suspense expected of a really good thriller. Eight guests are assembled in the living-room of a house on Indian Island, off the coast of Devon, England. They have all been rather mysteriously invited by a Mr. and Mrs. Owens, whom none of them actually recall meeting.

Over the fireplace the legend of the ten little Indians and their sudden deaths is displayed. The audience immediately gathers that the characters in the play will disappear in a similar manner; and that, by the progress of elimination, the culprit will be revealed. This, in fact, is exactly what happens.

Ten Little Indians is acted by a very capable cast. Estelle Winwood, Halliwell Hobbes, Claudia Morgan, Michael Whal-

Productions in Preparation

Henry VIII, by William Shakespeare, with Wilfred Lawson and Marta Abba. Directed by Margaret Webster.

Soldier's Wife, by Rose Franken. Directed by the author.

Seven Lively Arts, a musical with Beatrix Lillie, Bert Lahr, Alicia Markova, and Anton Dolin. Music by Cole Porter.

Song of Norway, a musical based on the life of Edvard Grieg, and featuring his music. In this, the great Norwegian dramatist, Henrik Ibsen, will appear as one of the characters.

en, and Nicholas Joy are some of the better known actors appearing. Albert deCourville, who produced the play in association with the Messrs. Shubert, directed and evoked all the excitement that the script contained. The scenery was designed by Howard Bay.

These two are the only plays of the summer's offerings that are likely to continue into the winter. During the last fortnight in August, however, two of last season's more successful productions reopened. Both of them had closed in June to allow their casts a summer vacation. On August 14th, Elizabeth Bergner returned in Martin Vale's *The Two Mrs. Carralls*. Onslow Stevens replaced Victor Jory as Miss Bergner's leading man. A week later, *The Voice of the Turtle*, perhaps last season's most successful production, returned to the Morosco Theatre. John van Druten's three character comedy played here to standees at almost every performance all last winter. It is a light, completely pleasant little play about Sgt. Bill Page's weekend pass in early April. Directed by the author, the comedy is superbly acted by Margaret Sullivan, Elliott Nugent, and Audrey Christie. Stewart Chaney's setting for a three-room New York apartment is the final note in stage realism. Water runs from the taps, lights switch on and off, and the refrigerator produces genuine ice-cubes. *The Voice of the Turtle*, is, however, superb theatre, and ideal escape from the troubles of the day.

IT is an extremely healthy sign that the legitimate theatre is availing itself to an increasing degree of the other forms of dramatic, or shall we say theatrical, expression. The theatre, which represents a fusion of several art forms, has been all too loathe to confess openly having called upon ballet, or opera, or the pictorial arts for material. "The play's the thing," was for long the watchword, and it was felt that the use of ballet or music would be an intrusion. Recently, however, the playwrights have realized that these other arts can be an integral part of the plot. I would be among the very first to abhor the substitution of spectacle in the place of genuine drama; but I hail its use as a

Productions on Tour

Kiss and Tell, by F. Hugh Herbert.

Two companies on tour of this very amusing comedy, which has played for a year and a half at the Biltmore Theatre, New York.

Oklahoma, by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, 2nd, based on the play, *Green Grow the Lilacs*, by Lynn Riggs. Perhaps the best musical of the modern theatre.

Porgy and Bess, the great folk opera, by George Gershwin.

Ramshackle Inn, by George Batson. Starring Zasu Pitts.

The Merry Widow, the famous operetta by Franz Lehar.



Funds contributed to the Servicemen's Library Fund by high school drama groups last season made possible the distribution of plays and magazines valued over \$4,000.00 to some 800 Army camp and hospital libraries. Each of the packages shown in the picture above contained a copy of *Theatre Annual*, *Janie*, *Three's a Family*, *Murder in a Nunnery*, *Junior Miss*, and *The Moon Is Down*. Shipment of these materials was made from the office of Samuel French, New York City, early in May. The Servicemen's Library Fund (see page 26) is sponsored for the purpose of providing reading materials of a dramatic nature to men and women in the Armed Forces. Contributions for the 1944-45 season should be addressed care of The National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio.

means of enhancing and adding color to the production.

Perhaps it has been the acute shortage of good new plays that has turned us to these other fields. That this shortage has existed is unfortunate, to state the case very mildly, but some good has come to the theatre because of it. Further familiarity with them must inspire our playwrights, give them new ideas, and in turn bring about an improvement in the written drama.

The most obvious case is the recourse of those creating our musical productions to the ballet. Since the overwhelming success of *Oklahoma*, every one of the new musicals has employed a large amount of ballet material and several of the ballet personnel. Little did the Theatre Guild and Rouben Mamoulian realize when they engaged Agnes de Mille to create the ballet for *Oklahoma*, that they were starting a trend. The production is one of the greatest successes of the American theatre, and it owes this success very largely to the ballet. They are not "incidental dances" (the term formerly employed), but an integral part of the production. The ballet "Laurey Makes Up Her Mind" in *Oklahoma* is genuine drama, and through it a large part of the plot is unravelled.

Miss de Mille next staged the dances for *One Touch of Venus*, and the trend became a custom. Paul Haakon staged and danced in the ballets of *Mexican Hayride*. The New Opera Company engaged Leonide Massine, for long artistic director of the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe to stage the ballet in *Helen Goes to Troy*. *Song of Norway*, New York's newest musical, employs a large contingent of ballet personnel in the dances staged by George Balanchine.

Broadway has turned to the field of

opera for two of its recent successes. Billy Rose employed the opera, *Carmen*, as the basis of his current production, *Carmen*

Tickets For Broadway Shows

Paul Myers will gladly assist readers of this magazine secure tickets for Broadway shows, and provide other helpful information concerning theatre matters to those visiting New York. Those wishing to take advantage of this service are requested to write Mr. Myers at 264 Lexington Avenue, New York 16, N. Y., indicating dates they will be in New York, plays they wish to see, number of tickets desired, etc. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

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Costumes: medieval.

Music: beautiful and specially adapted to the play.

Brooks Atkinson, the distinguished critic of the New York Times, says of this play:

"For Christmas observances nothing surpasses the simple miracle play with its fervor and dignity and its mystic almost superstitious faith. 'Why the Chimes Rang' in the one-act form written by Miss McFadden puts all the cathartic beauties of this type of drama within the range of amateur organizations."

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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LOS ANGELES

Mention Dramatics Magazine

Jones. The aforementioned *Helen Goes to Troy*, was based upon Offenbach's *La Belle Helene*. Jarmila Novotna, who played the title role in the latter, and Ira Petina of *Song of Norway* are both borrowed from the Metropolitan Opera.

A FEW seasons ago, Thornton Wilder used lantern slides to great effect in his prize-winning, *The Skin of Our Teeth*. No one has duplicated this particular device, but it is one that admits of great possibilities. The films have for long borrowed from the stage, but there is much in the film technique that could be most servicable to the drama. The conciseness of expression, the methods of lighting, the immediate establishment of character are all things that are noticeably lacking in too much of our legitimate production.

As the new season progresses, I shall try to keep you informed of further evidences. Already, Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, the two greatest classical ballet artists, have been announced for Billy Rose's production, *Seven Lively Arts*. Several eminent painters, hitherto not connected with the theatre, have expressed an interest in working on scenery and costuming. The interchange of ideas and personnel cannot fail to prove enriching for the entire realm of artistic expression.

We are on the brink of a new season—the theatre season, 1944-45. From this vantage point all theatre seasons look magnificent. This one is no exception. Many very exciting productions are promised. All of the producers, directors, playwrights and actors are announcing their plans. After a very sparse summer, we are hungry for new productions. All the announcements further whet our appetite. Let us hope that we are about to sit down to a banquet.

The Technician's Roundtable

Conducted by A. S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, University Theatre, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

IN so far as it is possible the topics discussed in our Roundtable this year will deal with home-made equipment, rebuilding scenery already on hand, and substitute materials of all kinds. With lumber now on the rationed list and with so many of our standard construction materials difficult or impossible to obtain, there is little need of my pointing out the need for this type of discussion.

While we are talking on this subject I'd like to make this suggestion. Why not use this department as an exchange for any ideas or information pertaining to substitute materials or unusual rebuilding and patching methods. Write up your 'discovery' as briefly as possible and at the first opportunity I'll include it with my copy for the benefit of all our readers. Send your material directly to me at the University Theatre, Iowa City, Iowa. Another feature of this department, for this year at least, will be "Where to Buy" notices. I've written a number of letters concerning canvas, muslin and enameling duck, and should I find a supply of this material you'll find a notice to that effect along with the price in our next issue.

Before we allow ourselves to become too

greatly bothered by the material shortages there is one step that we should all take. Make a complete and *thorough* inventory of all scenery, draperies, and equipment. Go through your store room, scene dock, and prop room with a fine toothed comb; you'll be amazed how much long forgotten scenery you'll turn up. Set aside all that scenery that is in good condition or that can be repaired; and if you haven't done it yet, this will be an ideal time to start a catalogue system of all your stock. You'll find a detailed description on how this may be done in the February, 1944, issue of this magazine. Salvage what lumber, covering material and hardware you can from that scenery too battered to repair. Remember to save every stick of lumber over 18" in length, you'll be able to use it. About the only kind of sound lumber that can't be used is that which is badly warped. Old drops, foliage borders or tabs can be used for recovering flats or patching them, provided the material isn't completely rotten. Any scrap of 1/4" plywood that you find is like finding that much pure gold. This material has long been frozen and even the smallest scrap can be used as a keystone. Use a nail puller to remove the coultnails. By using this tool in place of the claws on a hammer, you can remove cornerblocks and keystones from old flats without tearing them all to pieces.

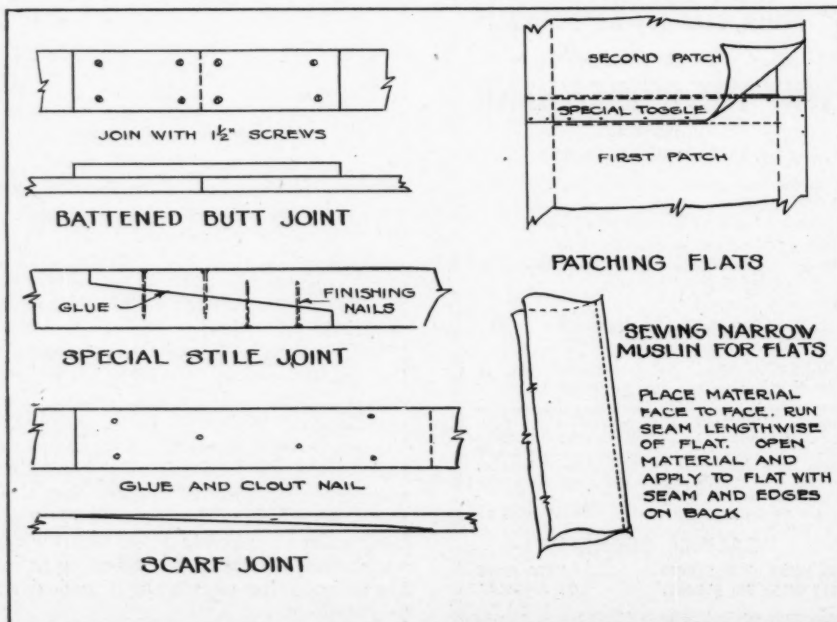
I fully appreciate just what a dirty job and how much additional work such a program as I've outlined will entail, but on the other hand no one will believe just how much re-usable material and long lost equipment will be uncovered until such an inventory is made.

QUESTION. A number of teachers write that they are unable to secure stage flats. What are they to do?

Answer: Make them! Detailed descriptions and drawings for the construction of

flats can be found in any number of texts on stagecraft. *Modern Theatre Practice*, by Heffner, Selden and Sellman; *Scenery for the Theatre*, by Burris-Meyer and Cole; and *The Scene Technicians Handbook*, by P. W. Barber, are all very good. The problem is not so much how to build them, for any one who can saw and drive a nail can do it, as it is what materials can we use. Let's assume that we've quite a stock of old 1"x3" that's been salvaged but that none of it is long enough for the stiles of our proposed 12' flats. There are three good joints that can be used to join these 1"x3" end to end; the battened butt joint, the special stile joint and the scarf joint. The first is the easiest to make but has the disadvantage of increasing the thickness of the 1"x3" by the thickness of the batten. This proves bulky and will not permit two flats to fold back to back. The special stile joint and the scarf joint eliminate this disadvantage and are just as strong when properly made, but they do require a little more time and skill in their construction. The accompanying sketches will give you the necessary information on how to make them. If you have a very limited supply of plywood for corner blocks and keystones, then I'd suggest that the stiles (the vertical members of the flat) be joined by half joints to the rails (the top and bottom horizontal members). The inside cross members or toggle bars can be butted against the stiles and fastened by small scraps of plywood or even pressed wood overlapping the joint and clout nailed. These toggles are under no particular strain since they serve principally to hold the stiles equidistant, consequently a skimpy keystone will suffice. Finding sufficient material to cover the flat frame may really present problems. Let's suppose that we've not been lucky enough to find an old piece of canvas or muslin large enough to cover the entire flat in one piece, but that we have located any number of smaller pieces wide enough but nowhere near long enough to do the job. Adjust the toggle bars, even add an extra one or two if need be, and glue and tack your patches to these. Overlap the first patch with the second across the full width of the toggle and so on up until the flat is covered. This is unorthodox construction, to say the least, but circumstances justify it and it will result in a flat that is capable of being used several times.

Be constantly on the lookout for materials that can be used for covering your flats. The local department stores occasionally get in a small supply of unbleached muslin or even ticking. Both of these materials are likely to be about 39" wide, but it can be sewn together to cover the wider flats. The ticking would be better as it is heavier but would likely prove too expensive if much covering was to be done. Do not stretch the muslin too tightly when you apply it to your flats, remember it will shrink when the paint is applied and may shrink enough to rip the seam. See the sketch for the best type of seam to use.



Make-up for the Stage

by IVARD N. STRAUSS

Author of "Paint, Powder and Make-up," Member of Board of Directors of Tryout Theatre, and Technical Director, Roosevelt High School, Seattle 5, Wash.

Questions pertaining to your problems on make-up may be addressed directly to Mr. Strauss. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your letter.



ANOTHER year of wartime dramatic effort is upon us, and with it, all the difficulties of a scarcity of materials with which to meet a developing program of theatre productions. During the year this department will attempt to give you, in addition to material upon the basic elements of make-up, as many answers to the problems of overcoming these shortages as space will permit.

Order Early

COSMETIC companies are still turning out large amounts of society-type day and evening wear make-up, but there is a curtailment by some manufacturers of the theatre variation. Upon investigation locally, I have found that Stein's products are still to be found in fairly complete stocks at the district distribution points. Max Factor materials have practically gone off the local counters, perhaps because of the heavy demand of the movie industry. The best advice to the dramatic director is to make a complete check on your existing materials NOW. Then place an immediate order for your estimated needs of the season with your local source of supply or send direct to the manufacturers for the materials. In this way you would be prepared early in the season for any situation in which substitute materials would have to be found and used. The following companies are located in New York City: M. Stein Cosmetic Company, Henry C. Miner Company, Elizabeth Arden, Helena Rubenstein, Zauder Brothers. These companies may be reached in Hollywood, California: Max Factor, House of Westmore, Inc.

Covermark

THERE is a make-up product now offered at retail nationally that is an answer to that situation wherein a badly-scarred or burned area, or birthmark, upon the face of a possibly talented youngster has prevented the full enjoyment by that child of his talents. There are many youngsters who have developed an inferiority complex because of a marked face which has drawn the verbal or visual attention of his classmates. This product, sold under the trade name of COVER-MARK, has the approval of the American Medical Association and is the only cosmetic carrying patent rights. It actually does, if directions are carefully followed, cover unsightly blemishes, burns, goiter scars, discolorations in pigment changes in the skin, and it stays on until removed. It will not crack or rub off. It is as flexi-

ble and as pliable as the skin itself. A child can learn to use it just as he learns to brush his teeth or comb his hair. I watched a girl of twelve whose facial disfigurement had given her an inferiority complex which made her walk with head bent low, eyes to the ground. The first application of Covermark produced an immediate reaction and gave her a new confidence in herself. She is one of the happiest youngsters alive today. This product is not cheap; and, as far as my own experiments have gone to date, could only be used for straight make-ups for the stage . . . but it is worth the attempt to bring out the lost talents of so many who otherwise would be afraid to face the eyes of the audience watching them upon the stage. I feel this information is worth passing on to all who are out of public contact in any way because of unsightly blemishes and disfigurements. Further information as to the adaptability of Covermark to your particular case, or as to the method of application, may be had by writing the Lydia O'Leary salons in New York or Chicago.

Textbook on Make-up

TO the new director of dramatics entering the field, or to the teacher who has just discovered that this year one of the added duties of an extra-curricular nature will be the handling of the school's plays and assemblies, the aid of a good textbook on the art of make-up would prob-

To students of stage make-up, Mr. Strauss needs no introduction. His book, *Paint, Powder and Make-up*, is recognized as one of the best in the field. As technical director at the Roosevelt High School of Seattle, Washington, and as an active member of the Tryout Theatre of the same city, he has the opportunity to observe firsthand problems in make-up, especially these days when materials are often difficult to obtain.

Readers of this magazine may submit their make-up problems to Mr. Strauss for an answer. Questions which are of interest to a large number of our readers will be answered in this department. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed with each inquiry submitted to Mr. Strauss.

ably be a necessity. There are a number of good books in varying price ranges that have been published in the past ten years which will help the new director and beginning student of acting to learn the fundamentals of this skill so vital to a finished performance. For the nominal sum of 25c the following units are available and well-worth investigating: *Modern Make-up*, a booklet published by M. Stein Cosmetic Co., 430 Broome Street, New York City, and *Pamphlets*, a series on various types of make-up, printed by Max Factor, Hollywood, California. Among published book forms, the following are of interest: John F. Baird, *Makeup*, revised edition, Samuel French, 1939; Gall and Carter, *Modern Make-up*, Banner, San Francisco, California, 1931; Richard Whorf, *Time to Make-up*, Baker's Plays, Boston, Massachusetts, 1935; Serge Strenkovsky, *The Art of Make-up*, Dutton, 1937, (a book, for advanced artists); and my own book, *Paint, Powder, and Make-up*, Barnes and Noble, New York, 1936. Any one of these publications will add to your knowledge of the art. Each has a somewhat different approach, but as the eventual technique evolved, in every case, depends upon the artist alone . . . the investment should not be a loss to any newcomer to the theatre. Once you have acquired a volume on the art, the rest is a matter of diligent practice until your fingers become accurately controlled instruments for perfected blending of colors upon the face, neck, and hands.

Suggestions

IT would not be amiss in this opening article to set forth a few suggestions of general interest and practical help for every student and artist in this field. One of the first items is that of keeping a scrapbook on character studies for reference in making-up various plays. A better system is that of the modern card index file which is more flexible and portable than the scrapbook. Cards of the plain four by six inch size are ideal for this system. These cards are easily carried in the pocket or kit, or punched to fit in a looseleaf cover. The make-up artist can quickly assemble the cards that fit the particular character types of the play and use them on location for reference. A suitable division of these cards within the file could be as follows: 1. Straight make-up; 2. Middle age; 3. Old age; 4. Historical characters; 5. National types; 6. Special types; 7. Beards and hairdressing; 8. Accessories; 9. Costumes. Cards filed under these numbers could be indicated as male or female, and given a third designation as to exact position in the file. It is then possible to set up an alphabetized listing in a looseleaf book, carrying the exact position of the card in the file. The illustrated magazines such as *Life*, *National Geographic*, *Colliers*, the *Post* and many more of the fiction publications, are a source of innumerable good character types. These will give inspiration to the actor or director in building the make-up to fit the character within the play. It must be remembered,

however, that the actual make-up must harmonize with the spiritual and mental characterization and not just be a reproduction of a copy upon paper.

The Make-up Kit

ANOTHER item is the matter of the make-up kit itself. Today, more than ever before, these kits will be limited in the variety of materials which can be used. Type casting is a simple though undesirable way out where over use of make-up so often occurs. Learn to simplify by using a minimum of grease foundation color and by subtly blending in lining colors to acquire the basic color the character demands. Search the cosmetic counters of the stores for make-up materials that can substitute for grease, especially in the straight types of roles. We've used various colors of liquid leg make-up (the hosiery substitute) for many of our actors. They provide excellent wash-off foundations if properly blended before completely dried. Thinned with a good hand lotion, they are good for many applications, and furthermore, they can be applied with speed . . . which is a necessity where large chorus groups in operettas are the regular unit. Make more use of the panchromatic scale materials: they are excellent for Oriental types and outdoor characters. We used them entirely for our present premiere production of *The Phoenix and the Dwarfs*, by George Taylor and George Savage, at Seattle's famous Tryout Theatre. Use more of the dry powder type of make-ups which, while more difficult to work with in character types, are perhaps more easily obtained. A powder base can be applied and character touches developed with powdered pastel crayon colors, if such powders are not available in commercial form.

Do's and Don'ts

A LAST item concerned with a few "Do's" and "Don'ts," general reminders to both new and old artists with grease paint. **DON'T** overload with grease foundation, use black so often for wrinkle lines, forget the bone structure of the face in designing the character, put on the beard or mustache before developing the character beneath, try to repair a make-up after powdering it, use wigs if the natural hair can be dressed or colored to fit the role. **DO** carefully blend all highlights and lowlights into the foundation, carefully place all lines to fit the approximate or actual position of the actor's own facial lines, check the stage lighting effects upon the make-up before the performance, check the make-up often during performances to prevent destruction of it. Next month, this department will be concerned with the fundamentals of developing any type of make-up for any role.

Staging the Play of the Month

This department is designed to assist directors, teachers, and students choose, cast, and produce plays of recognized merit. Suggestions concerning plays which readers should like to see discussed here will be welcomed.

Edited by **EARL W. BLANK**

Director of Dramatics, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky

Ladies in Retirement

(As produced and directed by Earl W. Blank at Berea College.)

Article by

EVADNA MITCHELL BLACKBURN

Senior Student, Technical and Art Director for *Ladies in Retirement*

Ladies in Retirement. Melodrama in three acts, by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham. 6 women; 1 man. 1885 costumes. One interior. Royalty \$50. Dramatists Play Service, 6 East 39th St., New York City.

Suitability

Ladies in Retirement is a lucky choice for schools and other amateur drama groups with the wartime male problem. Six women and one male carry the audience through an evening of unusual dramatic suspense—a suspense that would be intolerable but for an abundance of humor supplied by two "potty" old women and their devilish nephew.

Our Berea Players' production not only tested its suitability to the high school level, two of our heaviest roles being played by high school Thespians, but at the same time it proved that high school and college actors can work harmoniously together for a unified production. This was our first major play after the high school and college divisions of the Players were combined. Now we compete on an equal basis, high school having the same rights as college in the Players.

Ladies in Retirement is a long and challenging play. Nevertheless, we feel that high school students can give a creditable performance. The fact that this play in which two of the heaviest roles were played by high school members was acclaimed the best of all our productions to date gives us grounds for recommending it to high schools.

Plot

The entire action takes place within Estuary House, situated near Gravesend in the Thames Marshes. Miss Fiske, a retired actress of easy virtue, and her housekeeper companion, Ellen Creed, enjoy the seclusion of Estuary House until Ellen's two "potty" old sisters come to visit. After six months of enduring their childish collections of sea weed, drift wood, dead birds and sea shells, to say nothing of their inane chatter, Miss Fiske loses patience and orders them to be sent back to London. Ellen's loyalty to Leonora Fiske is outweighed by her insane sense of responsibility to her helpless old sisters, who plead to stay on at Estuary.

In order to accomplish this end Ellen is driven to the murder of Miss Fiske. She plans everything well, but a scoundrel nephew in hiding from the police arrives on the scene. He uncovers the mystery and hopes to use his knowledge as blackmail. But Albert fails to consider Ellen's conscience. Instead of gaining his end he prods Ellen into surrendering to the police as the only means of finding peace for herself.

Casting

The play offers few problems in casting outside of good cooperative workers. Ellen should be played by a girl capable of much power and ample reserve in her acting. The old sisters supply a chance for good character roles, Emily being suspicious and defiant, while Louisa is dependent and spidery. Contrast in color and size helps to develop their characters. Leonora, though elderly, still carries the air of a burlesque queen, enjoying a bit of flirtation with the opposite sex. She is slow to anger but once riled her red head responds traditionally. Albert is the typical cad, witty, domineering and equal to all occasions—especially with the women. He brightens the spirits of the old aunts, wraps the maid around his little finger, and keeps Ellen on constant edge with his underhand tricks. Lucy is the quiet, simple maid that is easily captivated by the wiles of a handsome young man. The role of Sister Theresa is short, yet important to both atmosphere and plot. It must be played by someone capable of showing age convincingly.

Direction

The play is a melodrama and as such can easily be overdone. The main task of the director then is to underplay and not let the amateurs run away with themselves. Much of the success of the production depends upon the amount of relief given the audience during the long dramatic sequences inherent in the play. The director must be alert to his chances for injecting good humor, well timed and projected business in keeping with the characters of the players. There is greater danger of under-doing the comedy, than of over-doing it. The audience begs for relief from an unbearable suspense and must be given it, if a successful performance is to be had.

Since the setting is English, cockney and



Stage set for the production of *Ladies in Retirement*, at Berea College.

stage speech help to give the atmosphere. Ellen, Miss Fiske, Sister Theresa, and the old sisters use the cultivated English speech. Lucy and Albert use the cockney dialect.

Stage Problems

We tried to suggest rather than reproduce an authentic pre-Tudor house. A few beams where they counted most and an old English casement window served to give the desired effect. The eeriness demanded by the play was achieved through broken wall lines, shadows and dropped ceilings over the stairway, hall and chimney nook. To give a still drearier appearance to the chimney corner we sprayed its violet walls with lamp black.

The main portion of the set was painted a dull violet sponged with moss green, the only relief from the moody colors coming from the red in the curtains and the reddish brown of the stained beams. The illusion of large heavy beams was achieved through building two narrow flats together at right angles; that is, we actually built only the bottom and front or the only two sides of the beams that the audience can see. These were supported by large posts camouflaged from three narrow flats. The corner supports were "heavy" cross pieces made of cardboard boxes secured in place with stove pipe wire.

The oven and fireplace were of cardboard over a light wooden frame and painted to represent old smoked brick work. Its black door was large enough to shove a body through, and inside the

opening was a second brick wall hinged back out of sight and ready to pull into place at the end of Act I.

Broom stick handles painted black and nailed to a top cross piece were ready to slip over the outside of the window for the second act. Cardboard came into use again for the niche. It bent easily around the arched top to form the recess, and it made quick easy molding.

The virgin in the niche was really a bundle of rags draped into shape over a little wooden support and painted broadly with blue, gold and red. The curlews called for in the first act were a similar camouflage. They were old black cotton stockings stuffed with more rags and lightly striped with white and gold paint. Drift wood was easily made by stripping the bark off thin limbs and painting them gray.

Sound effects called for an approaching carriage. Coconut shell halves lined with chamois skin and sounded upon gravel gave the effect of horses' hoofs. The convent bell was a large cow bell (tinker removed) lightly tapped with a padded hammer. Chinese chimes struck with a soft hammer produced the striking clock.

Lighting was not too difficult, a general gloominess was used for the main lighting. Contrast in lighting was important to build the mood. So for the gayer scenes we supplemented with bright sunlight pouring in through the latticed windows. During one of the weird scenes blue moonlight replaced the yellow light when the curtains were opened. The fireplace was lighted with variegated gelatin under drift

wood. The illusion of a brisk fire was produced when a small electric fan blew over thin strips of red-gray gauze attached to the wood.

Costuming

All costumes were of the turn of the century period—just the type you might find in grandmother's attic. Ellen's dress was kept dark and strictly tailored. Her sisters were rather shabbily dressed, Emily in tailored green flannel at the opening and changing to wine flannel for the last two acts, Louisa in a prim blue print during the first and third acts and changing to a gray flannel touched up with frills for the second.

Miss Fiske in contrast wore her fanciest frills and laces from by-gone stage days. She opened the show dressed in a light violet trimmed in ruffles and lace. For her last two scenes she changed to a hand painted pink taffeta over a frilly lace slip.

Lucy was dressed simply in a white apron over a cotton print. Albert wore loud checked trousers with a dark jacket and dirty hat. The nun was dressed in a long flowing black gown covered by a heavy black cape. She wore the white hat and neck dress of the English nun.

Ellen wore a black bonnet when going outside and in the first scene a black cape. During the third and final exit scenes she carried a black coat. Emily, Louisa, and Lucy wore light colored princess coats when leaving the house. Louisa had a small hat trimmed with bird wings. The effect created was almost as if the birds as well as her brains were ready to take flight.

Budget

Expenses for our production were as follows:

Royalty (one performance)	\$50.00
Publicity	19.15
Make-up	8.00
Stage craft	10.37
Miscellaneous	9.25
	<hr/>
	\$96.77

Educational Value

To an energetic cast *Ladies in Retirement* is an acting course within itself, offering opportunities in acting all the way from farce to serious drama. To the audience it offers a picture of the inner lives of psychopathic individuals together with an understanding and sympathy for characters that might otherwise be despised.

Next issue: *Junior Miss*.

"The first problem of dramatic craftsmanship, then, is to discover the secret of action; until that is found, any effort to build up a stage technique is bound to be meaningless."—Samuel Selden writing in *The Carolina Play-Book*.

Make-Up

	ELLEN	EMILY	LOUISA	LEONORA	LUCY	THERESA	ALBERT
Age	40	60	60	60	20	65	25
General Characteristics	prim	rebellious	sickly	flirtatious	gentle	kind	cad
Grease Paint	Nos. 12, 3	Nos. 12, 6	Nos. 11, 3	No. 12	No. 5	No. 11	No. 6
Rouge	slight dark	slight medium	slight light	heavy medium	average medium	none	average medium
Lipstick	lake	lake	lake	medium	medium	lake	medium
Eye Shadow	brown	brown	gray	blue-green	black	gray	black
Eye Liner	black	black	black	brown	black	black	black
Powder	No. 12	No. 11	No. 11	No. 12	No. 5	No. 11	No. 6
Hair do	up neat	up strangely straight	up strangely curls	up red wig	down soft curls held by net	covered	uncut, sideburns

NOTE: Numbers refer to Miner's Make-up. Other companies have similar numbering. Lake can be made by mixing dark red and brown.

Thespis Awards The Palm

TO EACH of the following schools for having produced, during the 1943-44 season, five or more full-length plays, as well as one-acts, revues, pageants, operettas, and radio programs:

Laramie, Wyoming, High School (Troupe 70), Velma Linford, director of dramatics.
Hot Springs, Ark., High School (Troupe 78), Lois Alexander, director of dramatics.
Hazleton, Penna., Senior High School (Troupe 257), Marion V. Brown, director of dramatics.
Jamestown, N. Y., High School (Troupe 364), Myrtle L. Paetznick, director of dramatics.
Chowchilla, Calif., Union High School (Troupe 434), Frank Delamarter, director of dramatics.
Kiser High School (Troupe 493), Dayton, Ohio, Robert W. Ensley, director of dramatics.
Holy Angels Academy (Troupe 568), Minneapolis, Minn., Sister Charitas, director of dramatics.

To each of the following schools for sponsoring one or more series of outstanding radio programs during the 1943-44 season:
Rock Springs, Wyo., High School (Troupe 248), Lorene Moothart, director.
Herbert Hoover High School (Troupe 405), San Diego, Calif., Ida Nasatir, director.
Litchfield, Conn., High School (Troupe 456), Francis I. Enslin, director.
Pontiac, Mich., Senior High School (Troupe 499), W. N. Viola, director.

TO DORTHY M. CRANE and students of her Dramatics Department at the Newport News, Va., High School (Troupe 122), for their superb work in behalf of soldiers' entertainment at Fort Eustis, Virginia.

TO JUNE HAMBLIN, Emily L. Mitchell and members of Troupe 156 at the Revere, Mass., High School for having won highest honors in the New England Drama Day Festival in April with their performance of a scene from *The Barretts*. Drama groups from six states participated.

TO VIRGINIA LEE. BIGELOW and members of Troupe 178, of the Washington High School, Massillon, Ohio, for their excellent news-letter, *The Thespian Masque*, published monthly in the interest of dramatics.

TO THESPIAN Hulda Cosner, President of Troupe 412, of the Union, Oregon, High School for her leadership in the absence of a faculty director.

TO DINA REES EVANS and students of her Dramatics Department at the Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School (Troupe 410), for their premiere production of *Figure It Out*, a full-length wartime script published by the U. S. Treasury Department.

TO ALL dramatics directors who, despite war-time conditions, increased teaching load, and, in some instances, lack of cooperation from those in authority, carried their dramatics program forward with exemplary courage and determination during the 1943-44 season.

On the High School Stage

News about Events in Dramatic Arts in the Secondary Schools

Fairmont, W. Va.

JUNIORS of the East Fairmont High School (Thespian Troupe 3) closed the 1943-44 play program with a successful performance of *Victory Home* on April 28, with troupe sponsor H. T. Leeper directing. Some six weeks earlier, members of the Thespian Troupe appeared in a performance of *Nine Girls*, which attracted a large audience. The other full-length play of the year, *Oh Promise Me*, was given on January 28 under sponsorship of the Senior Class. These productions were also directed by Mr. Leeper. A total of eleven students were admitted to Thespian membership during the season.

Cody, Wyo.

THESPIAN TROUPE 4 was formally established at an impressive ceremony held in the auditorium of the Cody High School on April 15, with Mrs. Max M. Thompson as founder and troupe sponsor. Those who took the pledge as charter members were: Elaine Apostolou, Susan Bane, Colleen Burke, Bill Curtis, Wilma Jackson, Rosalee Kimes, Doris Kin-kade, Ted Lee, Barbara Nichols, Verley Stambaugh, Becky Taggart, and Roberta Way. The season's play production program included *Growing Pains*, staged in December by the Junior Class, and *Smilin' Thru*, presented to a packed house on April 12, with the Senior Class sponsoring the performance. The year also included the production of several one-acts and skits before the student body. Thespian Troupe officers for this year are: Colleen Burke, president; Wilma Jackson, vice president; and Rosalee Kimes, secretary-treasurer. — *Rosalee Kimes, Reporter.*

Plant City, Fla.

A MAJOR dramatic production of last spring at the Plant City High School (Thespian Troupe 5) was the pageant, *Free Men*, which attracted a large audience and created much favorable comment in the community. The 1943-44 season also included two performances of each of the following plays: *Don't Take My Penny*, presented in December by the Junior Class; *June Mad*, given by the Junior Class in January; and *A Bargain Is a Bargain*, presented by the Senior Class on March 30, 31. Five one-act plays were given for the benefit of various school and community groups. Mrs. William E. Calvert had charge of the dramatics program and supervised Thespian activities during the season. Sixteen students were granted Thespian membership.

Anaconda, Mont.

TWO major productions were given during the spring semester at the Anaconda High School (Thespian Troupe 9), with Miss Helen McMahon in charge of dramatics. *Almost Eighteen* was presented on February 21, under joint sponsorship of the Sophomore and Junior Classes. *Arsenic and Old Lace* was given on May 1 with the Senior Class sponsoring the production.

Harrisburg, Ill.

A MAJOR dramatic event planned for this fall at the Harrisburg Township High School (Thespian Troupe 16) is the production of the War Bond play, *Figure It Out*, published last spring by the Education Section of

the U. S. Treasury Department. The play will be given by members of the Thespian Troupe. The production program last season included *Double Exposure* and *The Fighting Littles*, staged by the Senior and Junior Classes respectively, and several one-acts given for school purposes. The year closed with a pageant, *Sharing America*, presented under joint sponsorship of the Music Department and the dramatics classes. The season included broadcasts of four plays, *There Are No Little Things*, *Mother Buys a Bond*, *New Recruit*, and *Bargains in Bonds*, over Station WEBQ. Mrs. Lolo F. Eddy had charge of dramatics. — *Alberta Crebo, Secretary.*

Aurora, Nebr.

A DOZEN one-act plays were given during the 1943-44 season by students of the Aurora High School (Thespian Troupe 17), under the general direction of Miss Loine Gaines, troupe sponsor. The season's full-length play, *Anne of Green Gables*, was given by the dramatics club early in December. The spring initiation of new Thespian members was held early in March with the following students receiving the pledge: Donna Bryan, Betty Nielsen, Patty Schoonover, Pan Tudor, and Don White. Betty Grosvenor was elected Troupe president for this season. — *Maureen Swedberg, Secretary.*

Deer Lodge, Mont.

THE popular comedy, *Every Family Has One*, was given in April of last spring by the Junior Class of the Powell County High School (Thespian Troupe 22) as the final major production of the season. The other full-length play of the season, *M'Liss*, was presented in November under the sponsorship of the Senior Class. Among the one-acts given before school groups were: *Home, Sweet Home*, *While the Toast Burned*, *Let's Move the Furniture*, and *The Girl From Brazil*. The dramatics program was under the direction of Miss Edith B. Hamilton. — *Marjorie McLain, Secretary.*

Alice, Texas

TWO full-length plays, *Song of My Heart*, staged by the Senior Class, and *Night of January 16th*, presented by the Junior Class, were presented last spring at the William Adams High School (Thespian Troupe 24), with Mrs. Nell West Harvey directing. Among the one-acts given during the school term were *Bracelet of Doom*, *Children of the Inn*, *The Florist Shop*, and *Among Us Girls*. Thespians presented a variety of skits and pantomimes in addition to their appearance in the plays mentioned above. — *Betty Marie Copeland, Secretary.*

Spanish Fork, Utah

CLIMAXING a busy and successful season which saw production of the full-length plays, *And Came the Spring* and *Shubert Alley*, a Christmas cantata, a canteen review entitled *Hi-Jinks*, three evenings of one-act plays, and the observance of National Drama Week, two performances of *Smilin' Thru* were given to capacity audiences on April 6, 7, by members of the Thespian Troupe 25 of the Spanish Fork High School, with Miss Jayne Evans directing. The year closed with a program of one-act plays given on May 9. The year's work resulted in a total of twenty-one students qualifying for Thespian membership. — *Jane Matteson, Secretary.*

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Sac City, Iowa

SENIORS of the Sac City High School (Thespian Troupe 12) produced *Little Women* on May 17 as the second major play of the season. The first full-length play, *Tom Sawyer*, was presented on November 19, with the Junior Class sponsoring the production. The school was represented in the district and state play contests. Dramatic activities were under the direction of Lillian M. Holmes.—*Dean Strohmeier, Secretary.*

Middletown, N. Y.

THE formal banquet in honor of the Senior members of Troupe 74 was held early

in June on the stage of the Middletown High School, with decorations in the blue and gold of the Thespian Society. The evening's program reached a climax with the formal induction of 16 new members under the general supervision of Mr. Miles S. McLain, troupe sponsor and dramatics director. Present for the ceremony were Carl V. Warren, superintendent of schools, and Frederick P. Singer, high school principal. This impressive celebration brought to a climax a successful season in dramatics which included two major productions: *Every Family Has One*, performed on November 19, 20, and an evening of one-act plays presented late in March. The season also included broadcasts over Station WALL. Troupe officers for this year are Joyce Giering, president;

Stanley Markovits, vice president; Marjorie Durland, secretary; Jean Marks, treasurer, Aphrodite Santos, Librarian; and Cheryl Abrahamson, reporter.

Mission, Texas

A TOTAL of fourteen students received membership in Troupe 85 of the Mission High School as a result of the 1943-44 season in dramatics which included two major plays, *Lucky Star* and *Thumbs Up*, and several one-act plays, including *Junior's Moustache*, *No Greater Love*, and *Women Who Wait*. Dramatic activities were directed by Mrs. J. P. Heberle.—*Sarah Ellen Smith, Secretary.*



Scene from a production of *Seven Sisters* at the Robbinsdale, Minn., High School (Thespian Troupe 352), with Miss Bess Sinnott directing.



Students of the Concord, N. Car., High School (Thespian Troupe 202) appearing in a performance of *The Gondoliers*, with Lillian Quinn and Ralph Brown in the role of directors.

Stillwater, Minn.

DRAMATICS activities for the 1943-44 season at the Stillwater High School (Thespian Troupe 93) began with the Senior Class play, *The Sunshine Twins*, on November 19. This was followed with the all-school play, *My Tomboy Girl*, on March 23-25. The year closed with the Junior Class play, *Don't Take My Penny*, on May 5. A few one-act plays were also given during the season. The local Junior High School gave *Rise Up and Cheer*, on March 30. A total of fourteen students were admitted to membership under the direction of Mrs. Ethel Gower.—Eileen Terka, Secretary.

Weston, W. Va.

FOUR major productions made up the 1943-44 dramatics season for Weston High School (Thespian Troupe 99), with Miss Urilla M. Bland as director. Thespians presented an inter-class program of four one-act plays on December 10. The second Thespian play, *The Fighting Littles*, was presented on March 14. *Ever Since Eve* followed on April 20, with the Junior Class as sponsors. The Senior Class presented *Out of the Frying Pan* on May 4. The season closed with the graduation pageant, *This Is My America*, given on May 26. One-acts presented at the school assembly programs included *The Castle of Mr. Simpson*, *Christmas Is for Children*, *Hitler Has a Vision*, *Nine Lives of Emily*, and *The Eve in Evelyn*. Eleven students qualified for Thespian membership.

Wetumpka, Ala.

ASTYLE Revue and a Christmas pageant, two full-length plays, and a dozen one-acts were produced this past season at the Wetumpka High School (Troupe 125), resulting in one of the most successful dramatic seasons in the history of this school. Major plays included *Hook, Line and Sinker*, staged by Thespians, and *Abie's Irish Rose*, the Senior Class play, with Miss Alice Mae Bell directing. The playbill of one-acts included: *Orville's Big Date*, *There Are No Little Things*, *A Letter From Bob*, *A Message From Bataan*, *At Your Service*, *Men in Arms*, *Pudgy Saves the Day*, *You Can Count On Us*, *Grandpappy Jones Helps Uncle Sam*, and *The Spirit of the Times*.—Jeanette Hale, Secretary.

Newport, Vt.

THE one major play production of the 1943-44 season, *Spring Fever*, was given at the Newport High School (Troupe 107) on March

17, with Senior Class as sponsors. However, the year also included a vaudeville show on May 4, and a patriotic performance on February 10. Four one-act plays were presented at the school assembly programs, with one of them, *White Iris*, receiving third place honors in the state one-act play contest. Miss Angeline Ducas directed the season's activities.—Joyce Kenerson, Secretary.

Laramie, Wyo.

THE first dramatic program of the 1943-44 season at the Laramie High School was



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the presentation of "Stage Door Canteen" by some thirty new members of the Dramatics Department. Next came *Plane Crazy*, a three-act play directed by troupe sponsor Velma Linford. Then followed the Junior Class play, *Sky Road*, directed by Miss Elizabeth Hem. The Senior Class Play, *Brother Goose*, was given on April 4 under the direction of Miss Dorothea Knepper. National Drama Week early in February was observed with the performance of an original student-written play. Thespians sponsored the production of a bill of five one-act plays on April 24, with all performances being student-directed. The season also included a number of patriotic choral speaking selections by the public speaking classes. Proceeds of the year were contributed to the Servicemen's Library Fund and invested in war bonds. The initiation of twenty-two new members in the National Thespian Society brought the year's program to a successful climax.—Sylvia Morrill, Secretary.

Wendell, Idaho

DRAMATICS students of the Wendell High School (Thespian Troupe 71) enjoyed an extremely successful program this past season under the direction of Miss Lois Fischer. Four full-length plays were presented, beginning with *Brother Goose* staged as an all-school play on December 3. Early in March Seniors gave *Nine Girls*, which was followed on April 14 by the Junior Class play, *Wedding Spells*. The Sophomore production of *Our Town* closed the season on May 12. Students also participated in the local, district, and state play contests. The formal initiation of new members in the troupe occurred on March 1. This event included a production of the contest play, *Flight of the Herons*. Seven more members were added to the Troupe at an informal ceremony held on May 14.

Alderson, W. Va.

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE, presented on May 12 under the sponsorship of the Senior Class, was extremely well received by patrons of the Alderson High School (Troupe 72). Thespians gave *June Mad* on November 3 as the first full-length play of the season. Next followed the Junior Class play, *Everybody Is Getting Married*. All three major shows were directed by Miss Stella Nelson, troupe sponsor. The year's program also include three one-act plays, an in-school broadcast of *Is It Asking Too Much?*, and the operetta, *Kathleen*, staged on April 13.—Mary Agnes Roach, Secretary.

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Total Contributions for the 1943-44 Season.....	\$2,250.39

Kenmore, N. Y.

MEMBERS of Troupe 108 at the Kenmore High School received an interesting letter late last spring from a former member, Donald Martingale, who was acting at the time as stage manager for soldiers' shows in Greenland. Donald reported that his group had given twenty-nine performances for the benefit of servicemen and women. The 1943-44 season included the two full-length plays, *Seven Sisters* and *Junior Miss*. A few one-acts also were given. Dramatic activities were under the direction of Miss Eva Strong.—*Marilyn Hatch*.

New Hampton, Iowa

INCREASED interest in dramatics at the New Hampton High School (Thespian Troupe 110) was reflected in various activities sponsored during the past year under the general supervision of Miss Maud A. Tucker. Three major plays were given, beginning with *The Very Light Brigade* on November 15. Late in March, *A Ready-Made Family* was given under the sponsorship of the Speech Class. The third play, *Brother Goose*, was presented on May 16 with the Senior Class as sponsors. Several one-acts were also presented. Ten new members were admitted to Thespian membership.—*Mary Zeien, Secretary*.

Norfolk, Nebr.

DRAMATICS students of the Senior High School and Junior College at Norfolk, Nebraska, began their 1943-44 with a production in October, of *Seven Sisters*. This was followed on December 9 with a performance of *Suspense*. The Christmas Vespers program on December 20 was a joint production of the Music and Speech Departments. The fall term closed with a performance of *Little Darling* staged by the Junior College Division. Activities for the spring term began with a Musicales on April 14. The Senior Class play, *Mrs. Miniver*, brought the season to a close on May 5. Thespians sponsored a radio program in observance of National Drama Week early in February. Several other radio programs were also given over Station WJAG during the year. Miss Marjorie J. McGilvrey had charge of the program and served as troupe sponsor.

Oswego, N. Y.

A MINSTREL show in November and two revues in April constituted a part of the dramatics program sponsored during the 1943-44 season at the Oswego High School (Thespian Troupe 118), with Mrs. Gladys Steenberg Crabtree as troupe sponsor. Major plays included *Aunt Polly's Singing School* and *Best Foot Forward*, the latter being staged late in March under Thespian sponsorship. Added impetus to the year's activities was created by the production of eleven one-act plays before various school groups. Among these one-acts were: *Trouble in the Cellar*, *Christmas in a Toyshop*, *Spring Is Here*, *Little Nell*, and *Let's Buy Bonds*.

Newport News, Va.

"YOU and your players have never failed us" is the message sent late last spring by the Special Service Officer of Fort Eustis, Virginia, to Miss Dorothy M. Crane and members of her Dramatic Department at the Newport News High School (Thespian Troupe 122). By June of this year, students of this school had completed three seasons of entertainment for the soldiers at Fort Eustis, with a record of 196 performances given to some 48,145 men in service. Because of this special activity, greater effort went into the productions sponsored during the past year. Two major plays, *Come Out of the Kitchen* and *Through the Night*, were presented. Twelve units consisting of ten soloists and a one-act play were prepared by the dramatic classes for the performances at Fort Eustis. Especially good work was accomplished during the year by the production staff.—*June Dudonis, Secretary*.



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THREE radio programs were presented in
April of last spring by dramatics students
of the North High School (Troupe 136).
Students also participated in a production of
the Passion Play presented by the Black Hill's
Players. The season also included two major
plays, *This Freedom of Ours* and *Anne of
Green Gables*, presented by the Dramatics
Classes under the direction of Miss Evelyn H.
Clark, troupe sponsor. A few one-act plays
and a Christmas pageant were also given.
Eleven students were granted Thespian mem-
bership as a result of the season's dramatics
program.—Gwen Moore, Secretary.

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Bramwell, W. Va.

PHANTOM BELLS, presented on October
22, marked the opening of the 1943-44
dramatics season for students of the Bramwell
High School (Thespian Troupe 137), with
Miss Shirley Foster directing. The grade
school operetta, *What So Proudly We Hail*,
was given on April 24. The Junior Class play,
Bound to Marry, was given to a large audience
on March 23. Among the year's one-acts were:
The Dummy, *By Special Request*, and *Mistle-
toe*. Thespian membership was granted to
eight students under Miss Foster's supervision.
—Jimmy E. Loure, Secretary.

Bloomsburg, Pa.

FIVE major dramatic productions, with three
of them full-length plays, were presented
this past year at the Bloomsburg High School
(Thespian Troupe 158). The all-school play,
Excursion, opened the program on November
19. On February 10 followed the next major
play, *The Home Front*. On April 14 followed
the patriotic production, *Sharing America*. The

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FEATHERS IN A GALE 3-Act Comedy, by Pauline Jamerson and Reginald Lawrence; 5m, 6w, extras as desired, 1 int. The famed Arthur Hopkins produced this play last season at the Music Box Theatre in New York. Like three feathers in a brisk Cape Cod breeze, frivolous Annabelle sets her cap for a handsome sea captain, and her two friends aid and abet her! As Ward Morehouse, of the **New York Sun**, said: ". . . a beguiling notion. It's a bit of Americana, and it takes you out of the present-day world." **Price, 75c**

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One of the outstanding productions of the 1943-44 season at the Academy of the Holy Angels (Thespian Troupe 568), Minneapolis, Minn., was Emmett Lavery's mystery play, *Murder in a Nunnery*. Act I, scene 3 is shown above. Directed by Sister Charitas.

Senior Class play, *Suspect*, was given on May 19, with the season closing with the second patriotic production, *American's All*, on June 5. The dramatics club enjoyed an extremely worth while season, marked by the production of some ten one-act plays. Mrs. Harriet H. Kline had charge of the year's program. Plans for this season's plays are now being made.

Ashtabula, Ohio

DRAMATICS activities for the year 1943-44 season at the Harbor High School (Thespian Troupe 163) were confined to two full-length plays, *Sixteen in August*, staged by the Senior Class on December 8, and *Brother Goose*, presented on April 8 by the Junior Class, and the one-act play, *Pink and Patches*. These productions were directed by Mrs. Lillian L. Armour, troupe sponsor. A total of nineteen students received Thespian membership.—*Evelyn Peterson, Secretary*.

Maryville, Tenn.

STUDENTS of the Maryville High School (Thespian Troupe 164) enjoyed an extremely worth while dramatics season this past year under the direction of Miss Eleanor Badgett. The spring term included the production of the Thespian play, *A Murder Has Been Arranged*, on March 17; the Junior Class play, *Every Since Eve*, staged on April 22; and the Senior Class play, *Ring Around Elizabeth*, presented on May 16. Seven one-act plays were also given for various school projects. Third place honors were accorded to *The Valiant* entered in the Eastern Tennessee Literary Contest.

Doylestown, Ohio

FIRST place honors in the County Play Contest were received by dramatics students of the Doylestown High School (Thespian Troupe 167) this past spring for their performance of the play, *I'm A Fool*. This same play was given third place in the Northeastern District Contest later in the season. Major plays of the year were *Thumbs Up*, presented by the Senior Class on November 12, and *Don't Take My Penny*, staged by the Juniors on March 10. Both plays were under the direction of troupe sponsor, Bernice M. Althaus. The troupe membership was increased by eleven new students as a result of the year's program.—*Sarah Danemiller, Secretary*.

Bluffton, Ohio

THE operetta, *In Gay Havana*, presented by the Music Department on November 18, marked the opening of the 1943-44 entertainment program for the Bluffton High School (Thespian Troupe 169). The Junior Class

play, *Johnny on the Spot*, received two performances on February 7, 8. Two performances were also presented of the Senior Class play, *Jane Eyre*, on May 18, 19. Both plays were directed by troupe sponsor Paul W. Stauffer. The season also included the production of several one-act plays, among them being *The Signal*, *She Made a Pumpkin Pie*, and *Christopher's Christmas Candle*. The year's activities brought Thespian membership to twenty-seven students. Thespians participated in the production of the play, *Thelma*, presented by the Bluffton College.

Omaha, Nebr.

"TWO girls, Adelene Coad and Mary Lou Stevens, made *Junior Miss* the top amateur school straight-comedy bit of this season" are the words used by the local press in describing the production of this popular play late last spring at the Omaha Central High School (Thespian Troupe 170). Equally enthusiastic over this performance, as well as the year's program, was Miss Myrna Vance Jones, director of dramatics and troupe sponsor. "Our play was one of our best successes and we had a sell-out," she writes.

Grafton, W. Va.

AN INTER-CLASS contest with four groups participating, two original pageants, a variety of assembly one-act plays, and three three-act plays, combined to give the Grafton High School (Troupe 171), this past year one of the most successful dramatics programs of recent seasons. With Miss Ruth Batten as director of dramatics and troupe sponsor, the year opened with the Thespian play, *The Whole Town's Talking*, on November 16. An impressive Christmas pageant was given on December 22. On March 2 followed the inter-class play contest with four casts participating. An original Easter play was presented to the public on April 7. A week later the Junior Class presented the second full-length play of the year, *My Man Godfrey*. The final play of the year, *Magnificent Obsession*, was given on May 12 under sponsorship of the Senior Class. A total of twenty-one students qualified for Thespian membership.—*Dottie Lou Sterling, Secretary*.

Neenah, Wis.

THESPIANS of Troupe 103 of the Neenah Senior High School, with Miss Helen Paulson as sponsor, were responsible for two performances of *Ever Since Eve* on November 10, 11, this past season. The year's program also included an evening of one-acts: *I Pledge Allegiance*, *Be Home By Midnight*, *The Valiant*. A group of eleven students were granted Thespian membership.

What's New Among Books and Plays

Review Staff:

Mary Ella Bovee, Blandford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Marion V. Brown, Mrs. H. A. Dodd, Elmer S. Crowley, Robert Ensley, Teresa C. White, E. E. Strong.

Reviews appearing in this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. The opinions expressed are those of the reviewer only. Mention of a book or play in this department does not constitute an endorsement by DRAMATICS MAGAZINE.

Dramatists Play Service, 6 East 39th St.,
New York, N. Y.

Watch on the Rhine, a drama in three acts, by Lillian Hellman. 6 m., 5 w. Royalty upon application. This play will unquestionably rank as one of the outstanding plays of this war. Those who witnessed the motion picture version, with Paul Lukas and Bette Davis, recall the dramatic effect made upon the audience. The stage play is equally powerful, providing ideal opportunities for sincere acting and stagecraft. Drama groups with some training will find in this play an excellent choice to challenge their abilities. It is in no sense a difficult play to stage, as only one interior set is required. It is truly a play for an all-star cast. The fine drama found in the play, as well as its timely message, will be welcomed by audiences. Here is also an ideal choice for the drama director who wants to stage, during the coming season, one of the better plays. It will challenge the best in his directorial ability.—Ernest Bavely.

Knickerbocker Holiday, a musical comedy in two acts. Books and lyrics by Maxwell Anderson as written to be set to music by Kurt Weill. 14 m., 7 w., extras. 2 interiors. 17th century costumes. Royalty of \$35 first performance. Full orchestral score available. Deposit of \$200 required with \$25 fee for use of score each performance. This satirical comedy of life in the time of Peter Stuyvesant is full of Dutch flavor and should provide excellent fare for advanced and college groups. Too complicated and costly for the average high school cast, but satisfactory for college and community theatre groups.—Elmer S. Crowley.

Only an Orphan Girl, a soul-stirring drama of human trials and tribulations in four acts, by Henning Nelms. 3 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$15. The production of old-fashioned melodramas always affords drama groups and audiences rich opportunities to put aside inhibitions and enter into the fun and spirit of the performance. *Only an Orphan Girl* follows closely the traditional plot and stock characters found in plays of this type, with plenty of situations audiences expect and enjoy. No less welcomed are the songs and music planned to accompany the plot development. Mr. Nelms includes more than two pages of "hints on staging" which should prove extremely helpful to producing groups, although the play presents no difficult production problems. High schools, college, and community theatres, will find this play well suited to their needs. An occasional production of a play of this type these days should do much to ease wartime strain and nerves.—Ernest Bavely.

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Did You Say Mink? by Mary Thurman Pyle. 11 w. Interior. Non-royalty. A thoroughly delightful comedy amateur groups will enjoy producing. In desperate need of a maid, Mrs. Martin runs an advertisement in the paper offering, among other inducements, use of her mink coat on days off. Those who respond form an amazing study in human nature. Needless to say, the use of the mink coat, and not work, constitutes their main reason for applying for the position. Extremely well-written and rich in wholesome comedy. Excellent high school play.

Skin Deep, by Merle B. Young. 7 w. Interior. Royalty upon application. As owner of a Beauty Shop, Cora Lee seems to be losing customers by taking too much interest in their private affairs. This trait, however, succeeds in saving the romance of one of her customers from being wrecked by the beautiful but selfish Vivian Jennings, and Vivian herself gets a badly needed lesson in humility. Good drama, providing rich opportunities for character study.

Tell Dorie Not To Cry, by Guernsey Le Pelley. 6 w. Royalty upon application. Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, finds Patricia, her sister Dorie, and their friends in their Honolulu apartment, preparing for Patricia's wedding to Petty Officer Ronson who is stationed at Pearl Harbor. The Japanese attack kills Officer Ronson, Ronie learns that his love for Patricia was sincere, a fact which she had seriously doubted. If well done should prove interesting. Within high school range.

Sob Stuff, by Evelyn Neuenburg. 6 w. Non-royalty. An extremely funny play which drama groups can give with little difficulty. The fun comes when Bunny, the office stenographer, appears as Fanny Bunting, a creation of "sob sister" Amy Pendleton who conducts a column in the *Globe News*.—Elmer Strong.

Walter H. Baker Company, 178 Tremont St.,
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The Darling Brats, a farce in three acts, by Jay Tobias. 5 m., 6 w. Royalty \$10. One interior, easy to cast since there are really only two older characters. Easy to stage. The story deals with the attempts of the orphaned Darlings, each for his own reasons, to "marry off" their vivacious thirty-five year old Aunt Agatha to the man of their choice. There is opportunity for each member of the cast of eleven to present a distinct characterization. This play is recommended to groups with somewhat limited facilities and to those that are looking for uproarious comedy.—Teresa C. White.

The Life of Reilly, a comedy in three acts, by Theodore Lawrence. 4 m., 6 w. First performance royalty free with purchase of ten copies of play book. \$2.50 each additional performance. This amusing play involves the experiences of two families who have parted company due to a business feud that developed between the heads of the families years before. Financial reverses develop for both families and eventually Mrs. Olmstead and Mrs. Forsythe find themselves widows. It takes a "worthless" gold mine, the ingenuity of young Robert Forsythe, and the cooperation of attractive Mary Olmstead to produce a happy ending. Could be produced by any high school play cast.—Elmer S. Crowley.

The Love Clinic, a comedy in one act, by Esther C. Averill. 12 w. No royalty. Ada Love does a thriving business advising the lovelorn until her secretary, annoyed by Ada's treatment of her, informs the clients that Ada has had three husbands—one committed suicide, one ran away, and the third went insane. One simple interior scene. Some of the parts may be omitted if a smaller cast is desired.—Marion V. Brown.

What Time Is It?, a comedy in one act, by Dorothy Sterling. 1 m., 2 w. No royalty. For thirty years Joshua Stebbins has been courting Maria Mosher in spite of the fact that they

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disagree on every subject. Every Friday night he calls hoping that they will agree on something so that he can marry her. They are finally brought to agreement when his watch and her clock stop—the very objects over which they have been having their regular Friday night disagreement. They agree that they are both lonely and would be happier as Mr. and Mrs. Stebbins. One simple interior scene.—*Marion V. Brown.*

I'll Die for Dear Old Rutgers, a "melodrammer" in one act, by John G. Fuller. 5 m., 2 w. No royalty. Sid Holfplatt, the star full-back for dear old Rutgers, is the unhappy victim of the villainy of Rudolph Smudge, who, on the eve of the big game with Princeton, tricks Jane, Sid's sweetheart, into believing that Sid has been having an affair with Molly Flake, a dance hall queen. But, as always in "melodrammers," virtue triumphs over all; One simple interior scene.—*Marion V. Brown.*

Emmy, a comedy in one act, by Noel Walters. 2 m., 3 w. No royalty. Emmy, a lonely little seamstress, decides her life must be made over if she is to be happy. Therefore, she buys a number of books on "How To Be Popular" and "How To Be Successful." However, the results she expects are not forthcoming, and it is only when her understanding Uncle Joe takes a hand that Emmy finds what she has apparently been looking for all the time—Romance!! One simple interior scene.—*Marion V. Brown.*

The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Ave.,
New York

The Phoenix and the Dwarfs, a play in three acts, by George Taylor and George Savage. 17 m., 4 w., extras. Royalty upon application. (Production rights must be secured from Frieda Fishbein, 11 West 42nd St., New York 18, N. Y.) Here is a timely play of the New China—the China which is fighting to rid itself of century-old traditions as well as of the aggressors within its borders—the "dwarfs" of Japan. The old way of life is typified in Master Chou, head man of the Village, and Master Fan, the Village taxgatherer, both of whom are ready to pay cash to the Japs for the privilege of living. The China represented by the Chinese-American student, the man of words and wisdom who depends upon friendly nations to save his country, is characterized by scholar Li-hsien. The new, vigorous, nationalistic China is represented by the soldier, Li-meng, and his high school friend, Sun-Pao. The women of new China are typified by the educated nurse, Mei-lan. The conflict inherent in these characters constitutes the central theme of this play. The brutal ways of the invading Japs bring agony and death to the Village, but they also bring unity of thought and action to its survivors. Advanced high school dramatic groups should

have no difficulty in staging this play, with its timely implications. It should constitute an ideal drama project for classes in modern history or current events, not to mention its rich possibilities to students interested in the study of make-up, costuming, and stage designing.—*Ernest Bavely.*

Greenberg Publisher, 400 Madison Ave.,
New York

25 Non-Royalty Holiday Plays compiled by Moritz Jagendorf. Price: \$2.50. This excellent compilation has plays for every occasion including Christmas, New Years, Lincoln's and Washington's Birthdays, Valentine, Mother's Day, Decoration, Flag Day, Red Cross Week and others. The playing time of each play averages fifteen to twenty minutes. Arranged for age groups ranging from 8 to 16 years. Should be on your active reference shelf.—*Elmer S. Crowley.*

Samuel French, 25 West 45th St.,
New York, N. Y.

Busy as a Beaver, a farce-comedy in three acts by Russell Drake. 5 m., 9 w. First performance royalty free with purchase of 12 copies of play book. Judy Clayton is engaged to marry young Phelps Webb who has never achieved anything worth while although he claims to be always "busy as a beaver." The marriage is opposed by Judy's mother and her attempts to thwart the match result in many amusing incidents before the play is brought to a satisfying conclusion. Light, low-cost play within the range of high school students.—*Elmer S. Crowley.*

Murder in a Nunnery, a play in three acts, dramatized by Emmet Lavery from the novel by Eric Shepherd. 12 w., 5 m., extras. Royalty, \$25.00. The setting of this fast-moving and most exciting mystery-drama is Harrington Convent School, near London, England. The plot opens with the murder, by the "figure in black," of the Baroness Siema, in the convent chapel immediately after the close of the late afternoon services. The routine, if not dull, questions of Sergeant Mulligan and Inspector Pearson, who soon appear on the scene, accomplish little in ascertaining the murderer. This is counterbalanced by the quick and brilliant work of Reverend Mother who keeps the officers, nuns and students of the convent guessing as to what she will do next. Finally, by having the murder scene repeated—suggestive of the players scene in Hamlet—Reverend Mother forces a confession of crime from Mrs. Moss, whose son, the Baron Siema, is a Nazi spy, both of whom were intimately associated with the Baroness. This is an extremely well-written play which amateur groups will enjoy producing. Advanced high school casts will find it within their power to produce with excellent results.—*Ernest Bavely.*

DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

Plays for Fall

COME RAIN OR SHINE

By Marjane and Joseph Hayes

A gay new comedy by the authors of the extremely popular *And Came The Spring*. The play tells in amusing fashion of the incidents which lead a college-age young lady into a young womanhood which retains the light-hearted charm of youth. Ideal for high schools and colleges. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

BUT NOT GOODBYE

By George Seaton

Amiable fantasy about a ghost who saves his family from bankruptcy in a highly amusing manner. A John Golden production on Broadway. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

LISTEN, PROFESSOR

By A. Afnogenov,
adapted by Peggy Phillips

Without propaganda and grand dukes, this comedy deals with Russian family life in 1936, telling how his 15-year-old granddaughter leads a puttery old scholar into today's world. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

MURDER AT RANDOM

By Robert Finch

Humor and surprise are the keynotes of this unusual mystery-comedy which has to do with the adventures of a young man forced to spend a night in an old farmhouse. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

THIN ICE

By Betty Ann and Ray H. Mattingley

The amusing story of how the Edwards family gets its ego and several family vertebrae back into place during one eventful Christmas vacation. 75c. Royalty, \$25.00.)

YOUNG MAN OF TODAY

By Aurania Rouverol

The popular author of *Skidding* and *Growing Pains* has given us a timely and worthwhile play in this dramatically revealing history of the Jason family—and young America—in the past three years. 75c. (Restricted in a few territories. Royalty on application where available.)

JANIE

By Josephine Bentham and
Herschel Williams

The hilarious Broadway hit which tells what happens when a cavalcade of exuberant fellows in uniform meets a bevy of high school young ladies and they decide to throw a party. 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

MURDER IN A NUNNERY

By Emmet Lavery

One of the most exciting and diverting mystery stories of recent years. Eric Shepherd's novel about murder and detection in a convent school makes an unusual and amusing play. The Sisters and their young charges lead Scotland Yard a merry chase. 75c (Royalty, \$25.00.)

CLAUDIA

By Rose Franken

Popular comedy success. Child-wife Claudia meets three crises which lead her into womanhood. Tenderly, humorously told, the story has universal appeal—a big hit! 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

THE FIGHTING LITTLES

By Caroline Francke

Booth Tarkington's recent novel makes an amiable and delightful family comedy. Through three acts the quick-tempered Littles squabble their way through differences in viewpoint and ridiculous situations without even knowing how funny they are. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

KEEP IT UNDER YOUR HAT

By Hazel Peavy

When talkative Ginny inherits a detective agency, she manages to turn up a murdered man that talks and a host of other hilarious absurdities. 60c. (Budget Play.)

BEWARE OF MURDER

By Effie Berwick

A mystery-comedy for all-women. Strange goings-on at a country home on the Atlantic coast make for hair-raising chills topped by laughs all the way through. 60c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

THE CURSE OF AN ACHING HEART OR TRAPPED IN THE SPIDER'S WEB

By Herbert E. Swayne

Hilarious treatment of the meller-drayma makes this an unusual box-office attraction. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

THE DOCTOR HAS A DAUGHTER

By George Batson

The author of the popular *Every Family Has One* relates the comic adventures and misadventures of a small town junior miss whose over-active imagination gets everyone into hot water but finally emerges triumphant. 75c. (Royalty \$25.00.)

ALL GUMMED UP

By Joseph Spalding

Romance and adventure in a candy-factory which attempts to make antiseptic gum and becomes involved with Washington, priorities, and the war-effort when the gum turns out to be rubber! 60c (Royalty, \$10.00.)

BUTTERED SIDE UP

By John Wray Young

The almost simultaneous arrival of a beautiful young lady and rich Aunt Laura causes family ructions in the Diggs' household for a whole wild weekend. 50c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

SALLY SALLIES FORTH

By Hope Bristow

All about a girl from the country who goes to the city to get a newspaper job, then gets into all kinds of funny situations by posing as another woman-reporter. 60c. (Budget Play.)

SPRING GREEN

By Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements

Another funny play by the authors of the outstanding *Ever Since Eve* and *June Mad*; about a boy whose father doesn't understand him and a girl whose mother understands her only too well. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED

By Emlyn Williams

This novel and unique thriller by the author of *Night Must Fall* tells how a charming but sinister murderer poisons his uncle at a party on the stage of a theatre—and is brought to justice in an ingenious and entertaining manner. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

EVERY FAMILY HAS ONE

By George Batson

The eccentric Reardons, over-impressed with their ancestry, are brought sharply to their senses when cantankerous Grandma and a pretty visiting cousin drag skeletons from the closets, causing comic havoc. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

AND CAME THE SPRING

By Marjane and Joseph Hayes

New, worthwhile comedy of youth about a charming hoyden who, under the influence of Spring and first love, disrupts a pleasant, typical American home in a brightly humorous manner. Touched with sentiment. Designed to entertain. 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

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